

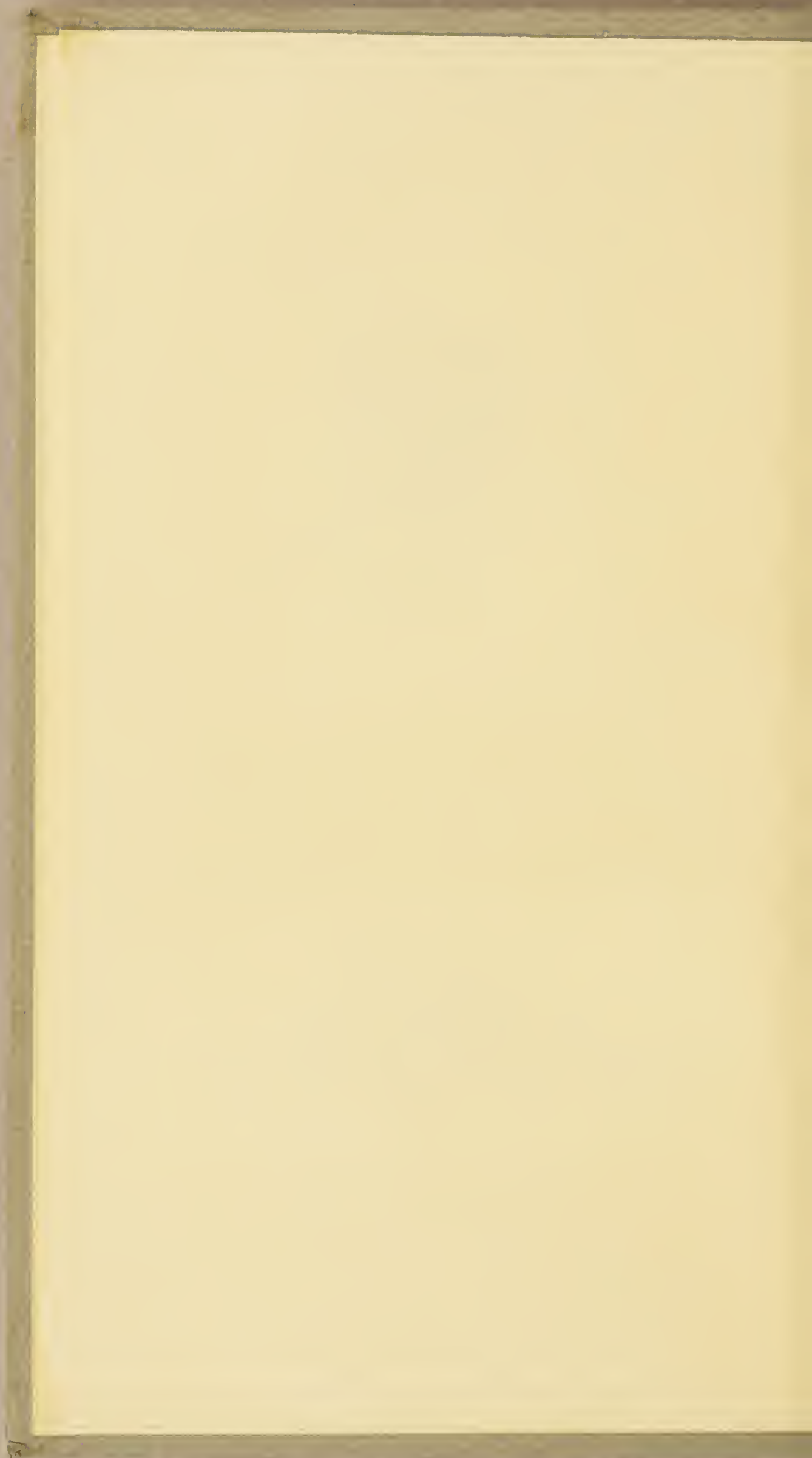




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376



PRIVATE LETTERS

FROM AN

AMERICAN in ENGLAND

TO HIS

FRIENDS in AMERICA.

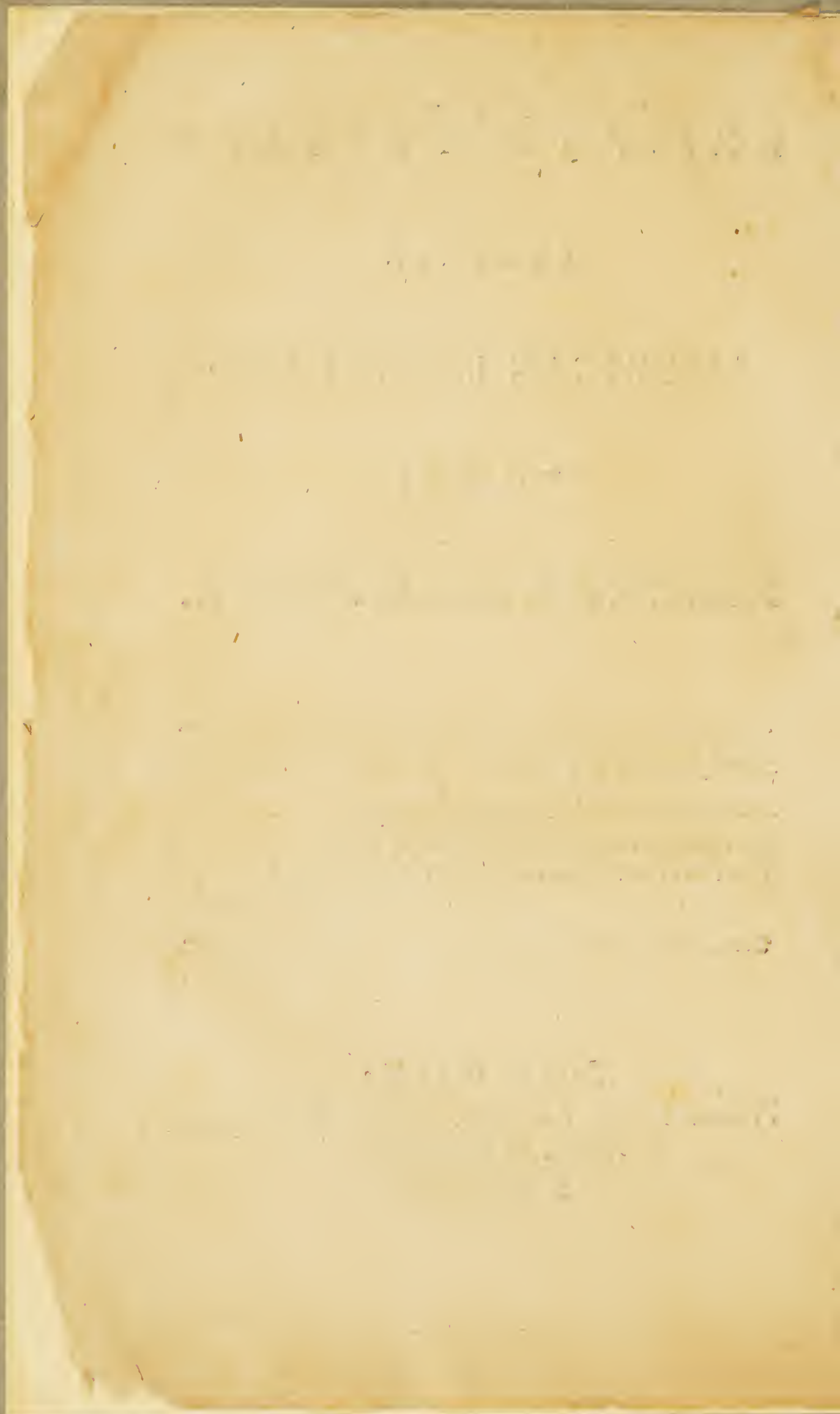
Quid sit futurum Cras. — HORACE.

———— Miserable England,
I prophecy the fearful'st time to thee,
That ever wretched age hath look'd upon.
SHAKESPEARE.

L O N D O N :

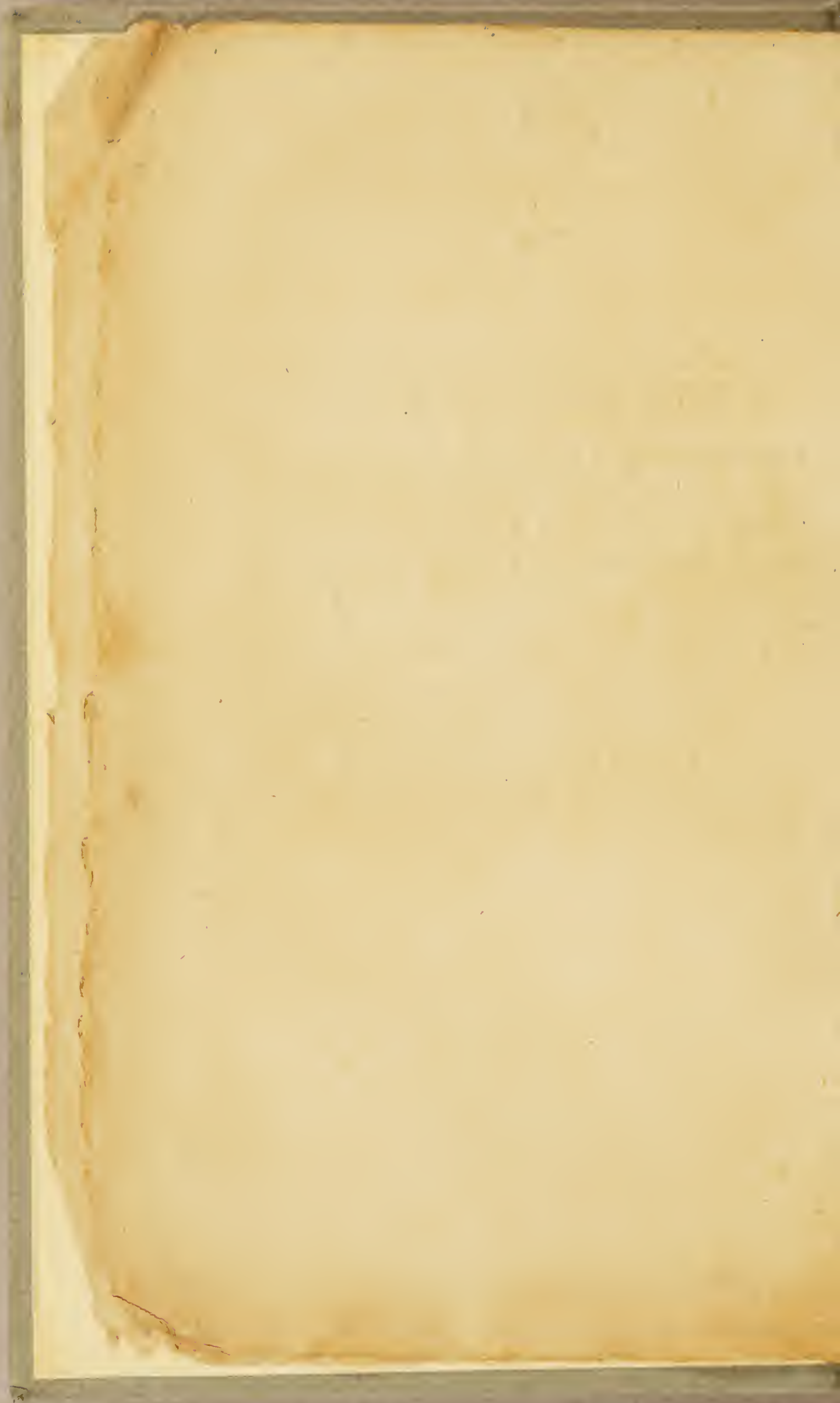
Printed for J. ALMON, opposite Burlington-
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M DCC LXIX.



A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

TH E S E Letters are supposed to be written towards the close of the eighteenth century, by a young American; who is stimulated by curiosity to pay a visit to the country of his ancestors. The seat of government is transferred to America; and England is an almost deserted depopulated nation; the condition of which, and the manners of the inhabitants, he describes, as far as he is able to collect them, in the following series of letters, to his friends in America.



Private Letters, &c.

LETTER I.

BOSTON HARBOUR.

MY so sudden departure will be less surprizing to you, as you alone were often intrusted with my intention, of once seeing a country my worthy ancestors sprang from, and of which, according to the custom of America, we still value ourselves on being natives.

For though the *omne solum* may be a good maxim for a soldier, whose kind gifts, when living, or kinder legacies, when dead, can seldom rise higher than a cartouch, or, at most, a tobacco box; and where his residuary legatee, perhaps, scarce ever gleans more than a round or two of powder and ball; yet, with us landed gentlemen, who can avoid looking back on the first rise of their family? though, perhaps, a simple Kentish man, or man of Kent—and what then?

B

My

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My great grandfather, as you know, or may have heard, followed that trade which, like the Hebrew language, begins with the tail. His office was to inject pronouns and participles into idle boys like common glifters. And my great grandmother was so notable a housekeeper, as to make wine from the same tree, whose branches were such distillers of juices equally as ruddy, though not so palatable.

He was a man who slighted all honours and dignities—and, as a proof of it, he refused the high offices, as he always called them, of church-warden and petty constable.

How often, as I have it on record, would he quote the following distich?

“ Too low in life to be a justice, I,

“ And, for a constable, thank God, too high.”

My father was a different other-guess kind of man, and was such a slave to honour, and what I call empty titles, that he was overseer of two parishes at eighteen years of age; and the inhabitants being small in number, he ran the gantlet of every post, 'till he fairly died (as Shakespear calls it) with *barnes* on his back: for, being at a parish feast, he so vehemently inveighed against the wicked custom of eating up the poor alive, that he broke an artery in the
midst

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midst of a patriotic speech for the good of his bleeding country in general, and the said parish in particular.

How could I expatiate on the virtues of this great and good man ! At intervals, from study or business, he was an horse-milliner, though this seemed only a blind for the better carrying on his other trade of smuggling, which had once near proved fatal to him, and caused him to settle in America. He was the first man who ever, in that part of England, brought ringing of bells to a science ; infomuch, that on his tombstone this is fairly recorded ; and, as I am told, my eyes will now soon convince me on my landing there. The following epitaph is still to be seen, as composed by the then sub-dean of the chapel-royal, a place, which always implies a man of genius and a fine writer. Nay ! is synonymous to it.

“ The man who lies below could never bend
“ His heart to lie, unless to screen a friend ;
“ He, for the parish good, himself confin’d,
“ And serv’d each office with a willing mind.
“ ’Till he arose, church bells could only toll
“ For ev’ning prayers, or some departed soul ;
“ But he, at length, taught ev’ry bell to ring,
“ In sweetest sounds, the praise of any king ;
“ And tho’ posterity scarce credits it,
“ He rung the changes, all like any P—t.

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But not to lose sight of my real subject by family affairs, ever unwelcome to strangers, much more friends, I shall, in my next, mention my arrival, wind and weather permitting, at some port of England; already are we under sail, the spires of Boston lessen, the shore recedes, and at once we are convinced, how insignificant even kingdoms are (how much longer the word *province* will remain among you, I know not) even at the distance of a few leagues.

But no distance, time or place, can make the idea of your friendship recede from me, or lessen the gratitude he ever will pay, who is

Your, &c.

LETTER II.

AT SEA.

MY first to you, from the harbour, no doubt, reached your hands, as it went by the boat which brought me on board. Separations of real friends are, to me at least, so affecting, that you could not prove your regard higher, than in complying with my request of not attending me to the embarkation. I ever admired Brutus's

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tus's maxim, "If we do meet again, we'll smile indeed,"

A brisk wind soon proved the globular shape of the earth, for we quickly lost sight of mountains, woods, and of course such little objects, as the villas of our private friends; but believe me, though I know America to be called the land of forgetfulness, yet will I answer for myself, that I shall never lose sight of the kind reception and golden hospitality I so often undeservedly, perhaps, met with at those villas; and, indeed, have frequently compared friendship to fine paintings, where we must retire to a certain distance the better to judge of their intrinsic value.

It is by accident you receive this letter—I did not purpose writing again till I sat my foot in old England; but a large fleet of shipping appearing in the offing, we lay too, and accordingly prepared to ask what news?

On a nearer approach, and friendly examination, we found this was only a small part of a much larger fleet gone to other ports, all freighted with the effects, valuables, and persons of several capital merchants, who had quitted Old England to settle themselves elsewhere.

As nothing is more common, than to en-

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deavour to make profelytes to our opinion, either in religion, politics or otherwise, so did these friends try every art of persuasion to prevent me taking, as they called it, an almost useless voyage; for they were, perhaps, the last families of any property or weight, who were to be called Englishmen, and that they had now quitted their country, because they had no further connexions there.

How? says I, and not with a modicum of astonishment—it was in quantity—am I then going into a land of foreigners? I have long been wishing to see my mother country, as we call it, though but the third in succession to its real natives—my ancestors were too much hurried in business to take the trip I am now embracing; but as their labour made me a gentleman, and of course, a person of leisure, I was happy, after paying the proper, but last respects, to a good parent, to set off on a tour, as I thought, of pleasure, the rather to banish that pain I felt, and still feel, in the loss of so great and good a father.

A venerable gentleman, with a complexion which exceeded the tint of a Cornelius Johnson or a Cosway, took me aside, and said, What I tell you now, young traveller, is not intended to check any design
of

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of yours in the voyage, because the change of air and climate may benefit your health and spirits; I think you are too dejected; but, otherwise I would invite you with your baggage on board, and you should return to the place from whence you came—we are steering for New England; however, do as you think best, but it is the highest compliment to give every man his own way; to a lady it is an infallible one.

I answered, that as I had had the trouble to settle my affairs for near two years; that, as I had taken leave of my friends, I should hazard the name of capricious and futile, should I return; and that, as while my family affairs were settling, I had rather be absent than present; a general change being to be made, which I could not so well bring about but by deputies, having not resolution to discharge many old, though bad servants: I therefore thanked him, told him that, however, he had abated some part of my curiosity, yet sufficient of that remained to take the jaunt; and so, having begged his delay 'till I sealed this to you, and given a few bottles to the crew, *to beat the copper*, as they call it, I took my leave of them, as I now do of you, with a God bless you, and all success attend you,

Adieu.

B 4

LETTER

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LETTER III.

OFF PLYMOUTH.

WE have been in sight of Old England for several days, but, as I learn, through want of trade and its consequence, quick navigation, most of the harbours are choaked up, so as not to afford channel enough for any thing but a cutter. As we are near eight hundred tons burthen, no wonder our captain acted so cautiously; and so we are to take to the long boat, and get ashore up some creek, as well as we can, which, as it never knew better days, can never know worse.

With my glasses I can discover this must have been an harbour of great consequence a century back. What shall we say of these amazing changes? But as the poet solves it, "And corn grows now where Troy town stood." The ship is to find its way to the Thames, if possible. This convinces me, what a figure Ireland would make had it not been the interest of England, formerly, to shackle the trade of that fertile and well harboured country, as they would be at market, at least from all the western ports, before a London trader even reaches this place.

Imagine me tolerably occupied in settling with my captain, dispatching this letter,
getting

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getting my baggage on shore, with many et ceteras, and you will not think I neglect you by this short letter; on the contrary, there cannot be a greater proof of my regard than snatching the first pen, and last opportunity, as a packet is now under sail for America, to inform you not only that I am well, but,

your ever obliged.

P. S. I shall not write any more 'till I reach London; from that city expect, nay depend on my punctuality—what observations I make on my road to that capital, I guess. I must call it soon, once flourishing city, shall be in my first from that place: 'till when, as a certain friend says, “take care of your health, and your spirits will take care of themselves.”

Adieu.

LETTER IV.

EXETER.

YOU see, already, I break my word with you, but a small accident happening to our carriage, we shall sojourn here long enough to afford you one letter from hence, which would not have been the case, had our wheels been less treacherous,

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rous, for then, my next would have been, as I before promised, from England's great city.

Plymouth made so melancholy and forlorn an appearance through my glass, that I had no heart to enter it: the plan I had of it, now on the table before me, pointed out wet and dry docks, arsenals, magazines, and, what Othello so aptly calls, *the big pomp and circumstance of war*; but from the account I had of the inhabitants, who were amusing themselves with a game they call cricket, at the village where we reposed, for want of something better to do, I learnt, they had not any thing to be seen in the maritime way but the models of several ships, according to their different rates; and from which, a century ago, they built those glorious sea castles, which made their country trembled at from pole to pole; conquered, like many Roman provinces, even by the name.

And now, was not this a sufficient reason for not adding to that melancholy I already was so possessed of, and which had been much increased, by reading several volumes of naval history during my *long, long* passage, insomuch, that every anecdote of English glory was afloat in my memory, and I was here presented with a strange prospect,

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prospect, that the same would never happen again.

The declensions of Empires, we may reason on what may be, from what has been the fate of so many much greater ones, are to be considered as natural causes: and, though a lack of industry and primitive œconomy, joined to predominant and universal luxury and dissipation, may hasten and push on the minute hand of their destruction faster, yet, as Lord Bolingbroke so well observes, “Kingdoms are mortal like those who compose them.” They have their infancy, their youth, their maturity, and, though care and temperance may postpone it a while, yet must the common catastrophe happen, when doatage and death shall long struggle which shall be predominant, but in the end, the conquest is determined in favour of the latter.

As a proof how this country was completing that very destruction it had so fatally began, I found in the village where we baited, and which, by the bye, consisted but of a score of common houses, two profest milliners shops, where the very servants had their caps made up for next Sunday, without giving themselves the trouble to put even the ribbon on. The common shaver of the town was, now, a regular

lar French friseur, and would have scorned to gain an additional penny, as his ancestors did, by *radically* curing the tooth ach, or playing a three-string fiddle; but as to the latter, he was in no wise culpable, for every full moon they had a regular concert of vocals and instrumentals in the very public house we baited at, and their ears had been so used to the notes, if not the sounds, of a Giardini, that the shaver could have stood no chance of getting bread that way, had he even early fallen into the path of his ancestors, and learned to fiddle through a book of airs and dances, “long ways for
“as many as will.”

Trifles light as air, says the almost divine Shakespear, *are confirmations strong*; and I could judge, from the vanity and idleness of this village, this little village, I may fairly say, how a once flourishing country, like this, has been sapped, and why it thus treads on to universal decay in arts, in trade, in glory, and, indeed, of common honesty.

Nothing past on the road worth observation—a few gibbets *in terrorem* shewed there had been laws in the country, if not justice, and I was told, that once in twenty years, some poor dog who could not, by himself or friends, raise a few pounds to commute his sentence to transportation, was hung up
to

to dry, as they call it, but seldom continued long; as surgeons, who live too luxuriously now, to purchase a body in the fair and honest way, generally took this method of making a skeleton at the small price of the fellow's life, who undertook the job, in order, perhaps, to rub off the bill of a brace or two of those disorders, which nymphs of the plain, now, are liberal of, no less than the infernal nuns of a Covent Garden.

Well, I am now at Exeter—my first visit of curiosity was of course to the cathedral, so my itinerary directed me; but as I approached it, every avenue seemed clogged with filth and dirt, like a London inn yard. Upon the strictest enquiry I found it had, long since, been a barrack for some troops of horse; and that the income of the said episcopacy, when in its glory, near a century behind, was now appropriated to *cannons* of another sort, for a small train of artillery lay near, which, though useless, cost the nation some hundreds, annually, to watch, by officers, comptrollers, &c. &c. *in secula seculorum*.

I asked, if there was no established religion in that city? And was answered, that what the Dissenters could not now engage, the Methodists did; a sect whose divine leaders, under the mask of gathering for the poor,
cry

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cry in the closet, "Who is so poor as myself? and so appropriate the copper dish, the surest method of raising supplies, to their own friends and relations.

This sect first arose from the pleasure and profit of a singularity, and increased from the natural idleness of the established clergy, who being too ignorant or indolent to make new sermons, left an opening to several young fellows, some of them, indeed, *fellows* of colleges, to shew superior dexterity by haranging without book; and so proselytes poured in on every side, to such a degree, that it was almost a cabinet affair to silence them; but a witty Earl proposing, that their chief, one W——d, should be made a bishop of, in order the better to silence him; the affair grew, from that moment, ludicrous, and has too much, perhaps, remained so ever since.

The last bishop of this diocese, as I heard, was of too noble a family not to be very proud, and of course very illiterate; his ridiculous discipline much brought about the amazing change we now see here. To find fault, he ever looked on as a mark of judgment, and so got the reputation of a scholar, by, in general saying, "I think
" my reverend brother has very ill hand-
" led that argument," without once prov-
ing

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ing it. You think! replies a droll fellow,
“nobody ever once caught any of your
“illustrious family in the fact of *thinking*.”

The adage of looking into the oven, reminds me of his conduct to the young clergy, who come from far to be ordained at this very city: his lordship privately gets the landlord of each inn to send him testimonials, how these church cadets live on the road to this collegiate place; but one of them drew himself, unluckily, into a sad kind of scrape, by being too obedient to his superior, for he wrote word, that one of the clergy, who slept at his house, had a w——e with him: now, it so happened it was his lawful wife; the landlord was prosecuted, severely too—the b——p, on a just and fair remonstrance, would not pay a farthing of the expence; and so, ever since, his lordship cannot gain the least intelligence of these very very trifles; and for which only he is so eminent a divine.

Adieu.

LETTER V.

KENSINGTON.

AS I presume every letter of mine reaches its right owner, I shall not recapitulate any part of a former one; for
should

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Should it, by any fatality, happen to more than a single one, your genius and invention will, I know, soon supply its place, and the loss never be felt to any but myself, as I would not have the smallest chasm, even in our correspondence, happen, lest it should appear an earnest of such an one in our future friendship.

Kensington is so near London, that I may almost date my letter from it as such. We stopt to see the vestigia of a once famous country palace of former kings, but which is now, with its large gardens, converted into streets, though not one house in ten has an inhabitant, for I don't call a buff-belt scourer on the ground floor, or a laundress in the middle one, true inhabitants of a building, which, by its square feet and altitude, was intended, perhaps, for a peer of the realm, or those of fashion, if not quality.

In my pocket map I found nothing of these buildings mentioned; but on the contrary, saw a large space of ground coloured green, intersected by a river, and called Hyde Park, so named, perhaps, from the ancestors of that noble family, or more probably from the common expression an hyde of land, being as much as the skin of some animal, cut into small thongs, would en-
com-

encompass; but I rather think the former appellation fav'rite of the two.

The first king of the Hanover succession took great delight in this palace and gardens: it reminded them, as it is said, by the flat situation, of their own improvements at home; but ill-nature and party would whisper, that the real reason was to save charges, that this place was the constant residence of royalty; for at the distance of other palaces, the whole court must have followed, and been maintained at a vast expence; but here, the ministry could pay their duty and return to their own tables, without incumbring that of majesty, who, but too often, by jobbs to gratify a minister, or keep themselves firm in the saddle, as they call it, run so on the wrong side of the post, or, as the more vulgar expression is, get their hand so far beyond the sleeve, that their names are prostitute at many a butcher's stall, or bacon warehouse: nay, so far has it been carried, that I am well informed, majesty has even been refused credit from an oyster stall or chandler's shop.

Pope's line, on another occasion, might here be tolerably well burlesqued.

"These are imperial works, and worthy kings!"

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I tried much to find the serpentine river, of which I had heard so much, nay, so often read of in news papers, of love-sick nymphs and despairing swains being drowned in ; I was soon informed, that it was now the common-shore, and that the large fountain of all was a common horse-pond in an inn yard.

This frenzy of new building first took its rise from the low interest of money in the several funds ; a man who had, by dint of some trouble and more stratagem, if not knavery, in false weights and short measures, amassed a brace of thousands by what is called home trade, could get but two and an half per cent. by it ; calculate this on any small given sum, and then imagine how he is to live in a city where there is no friendship or hospitality, as in distant countries, and where hardly any thing is given but the lie, and nothing lent but a blow on the head : excuse my fiddling upon words—yet, jesting apart, they pay for air, light, water, ground to walk upon, and must not make a candle though their kitchens and themselves, good lord, swim in their own grease.

But with this one, two, or three thousand pounds (which ever sum you will) a man may build a few houses, have the satisfaction,

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faction, and a great one they think it, to call them after his own name, like a quondam king's messenger, by which means he ever marries well, as women, here, are much governed, I find, by empty sound; and if they only last his life (few modern-built houses lasting their first climacteric) he cries, the devil take the hindmost, d—n posterity, what has posterity done for me? So the houses fall, the materials are sold, and, as David so judiciously says, "the place of that man is no more to be found."

So fond are these people of hearing the jingle of their own names, that I have known a passage* of three houses and an half, with a further fraction of a fourth, which has been called after them: an alley is in character compared to this, but squares and streets are, right and left, so christened through the whole city.

Necessity, perhaps, even occasions this, no less than self vanity; for, on the very name of a street, though, perhaps, every single house is mortgaged to the altic story, many a man, as I said before, marries well, raises a sum of money, has credit with his butcher, baker, and that list of necessary

* Agat's Passage.

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rogues, who if they were not engrossers, regraters, and monopolizers, would only deserve the common gallows; but now, a bit of a g—, (or gib—it, if I must utter it) is their proper reward; and pray heaven they may verily have their reward.

Near this place stood an house where a man, from being only a clerk in office, (but an earl's brother though) amassed near a million sterling, by having passed the several offices of paymaster general, and other lucrative employs, and never was caught once in the fact of blushing, for either what he did or did not do.

I have read, in a satire of those days (but the arrows of satire cannot penetrate the tough leather of coaches, or pierce through the double wainscot of their parlours) some lines on him, which very much pleased me, but at the same time convinced me, that the fangs of satire are very much rounded, and rendered harmless by the dissipation of each reader; the author mentions how every man, more or less, has his price; some are caught with ribbons and stars, others with title, a third with power, and a fourth with preferment; but speaking of this person (no doubt, by the playing on his name, it must be the same, though a century back) he says,

“ But

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“ But one, by name more cunning, *entre nous*,
“ Took, at one gulp, place, pension, title too;
“ His party rail’d when first they heard the trick,
“ But finding that it never made him sick,
“ The devil take the hindmost, one man cry’d,
“ Another, in the self same key, replied;
“ So one and all approv’d the maxim soon,
“ And every squeamish stomach lick’d the spoon ”

My next will really be from London, this is a kind of interlocutory one; but every one, I hope, will convince you how much I am

Your obliged.

LETTER VI.

LONDON.

AT length I am arrived, as Othello says, “ at the sea-mark of my utmost “ sail,” for, from the little I saw on each side the road, between Plymouth and this place, am quite out of heart for any further visit into the country of England.

My first design, you know, was to have visited every city in the island; the several cathedrals, as I had seen the prints of them, were, in part, my inducement; but as I find, from all accounts, that religion is at its last gasp, even in the villages, no doubt I shall see less in the capital churches, as

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those kind of diseases flow from the head, downwards, and rarely begin, nay, if ever they do, never succeed when they rise from the extremities.

The only change I shall make in my intended tour, will be to Scotland; this was originally never intended by me; from their itinerant method of getting their bread, I should have thought the country not worth staying in, and it is more than barely reported this was its situation formerly; but at present, thanks to a favourite of their nation, (above a century ago) that country is, now, the garden of this part in Europe—and though the climate will not admit of ripe fruits, and rich plants, yet have they such quantities of money, that scarce a gentleman of five hundred per annum, is now without his pinery; and hot houses are more frequent there, I am told, than were naked limbs in former ages.

Many jests, nay, they are even transmitted to latest posterity, by printed books, were once current about a poor single passage by a ferry, across the Tweed; and one among others, was, that when any passenger passed to Scotland, they never asked him for money, as being certain he would return, and soon too; but when the very richest Scotchman passed to England, they made

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made him pay, as knowing he never would pass back again, and was a fool if he did.

You have often repeated part of an epigram, in those days, which, to common readers, will better explain this,

“ Had Cain been Scot, God would have chang’d
his doom,

“ Not sent him wand’ring, but confin’d him
home.”

However, I hear the wandering character of them is quite at an end, for, about a century since, they crept into such favour at court, that scarce was there a considerable post vacant; in law, physic, the army, navy, nay, the very church, but the natives of this country possessed it.

One cause of the depopulation in this part of England was, I hear, owing to this strange partiality to them—in such torrents did they pour southward, that the once poor ferry could no longer answer its original end; so that from one bridge over the Tweed, which was then thought a very hazardous expence to the proprietors, no less than *forty-five* are still to be found, every one of which have, in proportion, their toll answer in interest to the several owners.

As the natives of this country ever retain presbytery principles, it has often given
C 4 cause

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cause of wonder, no less than complaint, that bishops of the established church of England, should be raised from their universities—yet, but too often, has it happened, and, perhaps, is one of those reasons in the universal decay of religion southwards.

Suckled in clannish principles, and nursed in the custom of trying causes without juries, the jealousies southward were ever strongest, when any gentleman of this country, though ingenious to a proverb, ascended the upper bench of law; but as so many printed accounts of this universal error are to be seen in your so well-chosen library, I will return to my intended subject, of which I had near lost sight, and, if ever I have occasion to open the cause again, will certainly be more particular, by gaining sly intelligence from the natives here, which is very easily done by making them believe you are descended from a family of that nation.

Our fortune, in America, having been originally made from trade, it was very natural I should chuse to take up my headquarters in the city. By the grand appearance of streets, squares, and almost palaces, from the once county town of Brentford, I foolishly imagined, this must be from the overflowings of trade, and that the city, from whence such treasures must issue, still
was

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was the feat of hurry and confusion—I mean that glorious part of it which is occasioned by traffic.

But after passing a place called Leicester Square, where the pedestal only of an Equestrian statue still remained, I found nothing but unroofed buildings, common sewers open to the air, and, of course, very offensive, grass growing between the interstices of the stones, on the foot-way, and, in short, every thing symptomatic of desolation.

However, I ordered the coachman to drive me towards the exchange; the fellow laughed, and said, he supposed I had heard there was, now, no such place; but that he could shew me the ground it once stood upon, the same being, at present, a kind of college for repentant prostitutes.

These candidates daily grew so numerous, that one or two receptacles were not found sufficient to contain them, as was the case formerly; but in fact, it is such a clever contrivance to escape creditors, get cured of a certain disorder *gratis*, or be rid of a bastard child, that no wonder every apartment has its weeping inhabitants in public, who laugh in private, to think what fools people must be to give up their money to support it; and how cordially their penitence

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tence is swallowed by joining in an hymn or two, or weeping at the farcical piety of some popular *dod-ging* preacher.

Indeed I find most hospitals, on due examination, are built to aid and assist young physicians, surgeons, apothecaries, chaplains, matrons, nurses, with many an *et cetera*, more than for the sake of the several poor objects; but I will explain this, in future letters, more amply; at present, as I grow tedious and tiresome to myself, so must I of course be to others, therefore, not to overload the carriage of incivility at present,
Adieu.

L E T T E R VII.

LONDON.

I Already find, by my situation here, that I am rather to search for antiquities, or vestiges of what has been, than what may be to be found in this strange depopulated place.

Yesterday I naturally made my first pilgrimage to St. Paul's, I was determined to walk it, as the rubbish of old uninhabited houses made it difficult for a carriage to pass, which I found by experience, yesterday.

On approaching the west door, for I most
exactly

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exactly followed the plan in my hand, I saw a kind of harlequin walking to and fro, and a sort of Italian, playing on a guittar; I asked them if I could be admitted to see the church? My answer was, if you mean to see the pantomime, the other door leads you to it, but if you intend being at the concert, with the last favourite burletta, this is the entrance; but, as a friend, am to tell you that there is no room.

The house of prayer being made a den of thieves, in an instant, occurred to me; but, as that might be every ones simple observation, I rather kept my sentiments to myself, than suffer Mr. harlequin, or the castrata, to tire me with their animadversions on the occasion.

I pleaded rather engagements elsewhere, than myself unlock the secret, that I was shocked at such a melancholy change, but took the earliest occasion, from other hands, to enquire into the causes of this so surprising a metamorphosis.

I learned, then, that about a century past, the luxury of both bishop, dean and residentiaries was such, that they first began to feel their way, by letting all their burial vaults to a wine seller: the usual jest of parsons preaching over their liquor, soon vanished—for the additional revenue, even
of

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of this, much augmented their annual income, nay, very considerably; so, by degrees, finding religion of no value, from the increase of Deism and Methodist chapels, they got leave to alienate this great building to the uses at present, and from humble port, or an humbler pot of porter, not a fine-cure ecclesiastic, but revels in Burgundy, shews almost royal furniture in his princely apartments; and, when asked how he can be so unfeeling in such circumstances, has an answer at hand, "*sic transit gloria mundi!*"

Had not my great grandfather's brother been a dignitary of this very cathedral, I could easier have reconciled myself to see the amusements in question, but it affected me so, to even hear it at the outside of the dwelling, that, I am sure, my sufferings within must have increased in proportion, and so I walked away to Black Friars bridge, in order to conclude the morning with some object rather more chearful and less affecting.

On entering, I asked the man at the toll-gate to change a shilling, as I had no copper money; he answered, that sometimes, in the whole day, he did not even get a single penny, as other bridges were built above old London, which carried all the
travellers

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travellers that way ; besides, added he, there are so many apertures, for want of a regular reparation here, that you would find it difficult to pass, especially if you are troubled with my disorder of a vertigo, for I cannot cross upon a single plank, no more than I could dance on the wire at St. Paul's theatre there.

Have you, Sir, said he, seen any of their amusements ? I hear an amazing account of them. Between ourselves, I think the chapter did well to make some advantage of it in this way, in the other, I know by experience, it never would have answered—my father told me, that fifty years ago, he foresaw the scheme of preaching was all over in consecrated buildings ; a tabernacle, Sir, is the thing ; any barn, stable, or out-house, is more in the primitive state of Christianity ; did our Lord and master ever shew a love for gilded roofs and glittering spires ? stained windows, carved seats of ease, and velvet cushions ? Where is the difference between the pope of Rome and our archbishop ? Or between St. Paul's or St. Peter's, if the outward and visible sign of worship is only to be look'd upon ?

You see, Sir, which side of the question I am on—commend me to a preacher, who, like St. Paul, gives up an independent

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pendant income to follow the cross; or, like the other apostles, quits a calling to pursue a better call: may not a carpenter, a joiner, a taylor, or a waterman here, be a good preacher, if the spirit enlightens him? Does the air of a college, or the fumes of an Oxford kitchen, make a man really divine? The pomp of families may promote this scheme, and I know it does, and no bad scheme is it to make so many years residence there, as they call it, very necessary, even though you are about two thirds of the time before you can obtain their idle honours: it makes no small sum of cash circulate among them; yes, yes, you eat and drink yourself into degrees—you need but stay long enough, and you grow into a doctor of any faculty; you may be a civilian without having read a page of law, a professor of theology without being intimate even with one leaf of a bible; and as to physic! there a wig does it, or nostrum or two—but a chariot kills or cures, just as he and the heir at law agree it, one among another,

I would fain have answered my questionist occasionally, but he seemed such a master in the science of defence, that I rather chose to be his scholar.

He

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He went on, Sir, said he, by your complexion you are lately arrived from the East or West indies, no matter which, and seem a stranger to alterations which, indeed, any one, I think, might have been prophet enough to have foreseen near a century back, if they had any eyes at all; why my great, great, grandfather (who was an high church priest) would no more have believed that his descendant, myself I mean, should be an eminent preacher, my enemies confess that, and this, truly, because I was bred a pan-tile peg-maker; but I'll scripture it with the best of them—come next Sunday, and you shall hear me on a mount, here, in St. George's Fields, where once stood a windmill; this occasions many jests that I am a turn-about apostle, but what matters that, I get money, and many a fine haunch of venison have I extracted from penance and absolution, for we Methodists allow of that; aye, and many a bottle of Burgundy has flowed down my throat, here, from a six-penny book of piety, nothing sells better, especially if the title page is uncommon; I well remember to have treated the public with a volume every month almost. (I was then more disengaged) with this title, “The groans of Christians dying daily.” Observe no more died at that time, than any other;
a fe-

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a second had, "the nails of the cross clenched in every man's heart." In short, but, added he, I am relieved from this duty you see—every other day I am here, and should be glad to see you always, the captain, as they say in the Beggar's Opera, is always at home, ha! ha! ha!

This is as near what passed between us as bare memory can suggest. 'Till I meet him again, or somebody like him,

Believe me yours, &c.

L E T T E R VIII.

LONDON.

IN complaisance to friends, and particular ones too, I am forced to alter the plan I had previously settled, of taking every curiosity, or rather antiquity, in a regular way, as printed books, or written informations direct—and, for the sake of their friendship and company, just go where they carry me; or, as is the common expression, let the stick fall and direct me which path to chuse.

However! this day their inclination and mine happened to suit, for the visit was to some venerable members of the antiquarian society, from whom no small intelligence

gence was to be expected, at least, report said as much, and the warmth of friendship is apt to strengthen this, my friends being intimate there.

The figure of the first gentleman we saw, was, by the addition of white locks and very open features, so affecting, that I was determined to believe every thing he said, though, seemingly, ever so preposterous; and prejudice, in favour of any one, we find, will too often do this.

On being admitted into the *sanctum sanctorum* of his cabinet, I stood with the humility and attention of a pupil before his preceptor; no Cumberland sizer or Welch servitor could tremble more, when summonsed before a senior fellow of his own college for a peccadillo, which, when the *pituita molesta* of these tyrants is rising, becomes a kind of high treason, and is almost punished in the same way; for a lad may as well be quartered up alive, as turned out of his quarters; and who but must dread expulsion, that does not know where to go for a lodging, even that very night?

But to take up the thread I had accidentally lost; having waited a few minutes, the gentleman rung his bell, ordered his servant to bring in some folios, quartos, duodecimos, and elzivers; desiring me to

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fit down; a table being now between us, it was very natural for me to expect an insight, by these books, when they came, into the very arcana of antiquity—but honest David entering the room with *magnum bonums*, bottles, pints, and glasses, I soon, very soon had the mortification to discover, that the folios were the first of these, the second were quartos, duodecimos were pints, and the glasses elzivers.

Well, young gentleman, says he, what wine, and of what colour do you chuse? These are the enlivening books we read—Did you really come from America, I have heard as much, to see us and our brother *fellows*? Hope you had some other points in view, and that this happened only interlocutorily; however, since you are here, take this in a whisper—nay, I am so far independant, that I care not if I talk it loud, we are all wrong—and know less of the matter than the footman who brought in the library here, just now—come, turn over t’other page or two—red or white, ’tis old wine, you need not fear it, or spare it, and, indeed, as a great author of our country remarks, give me old wine to drink, old wood to burn, and old friends to converse with; any thing but old women, and old cloaths, so give me the young one of your heart—
drink

drink away, twenty may play as well as one, d—n antiquity, I spent an idle number of years, and more idle money, to get at it; and what was it? Hunting for rusty iron, mouldy halfpence, and dining with duke Humphry.

If I had had room to put in a word or two, I would have asked why then, a century ago, was this laudable society instituted? But he now, after a brace or two of bumpers, chang'd his accent, and became the very man I wish'd—He thus began:

About a century since the foreign fashion of titles began to creep in among us, the letters of F. R. S. were become, as Shakespeare has it, so hackneyed in the eyes of men, that indeed they were of no value; some ingenious people, now, cast about to have a feather tacked to their names, not rendered so cheap as was the other, on which our society was immediately set on foot; some men of real knowledge led the way, and, for a while, the scheme was reputable enough, I wish I could say as much now; but so entirely are we addicted to love sounds, rather than things, that I fear, out of the whole number, scarce two and an half per cent. of them, can tell an Otho from a Birmingham halfpenny, or Camillus's shield from a common trencher; 'tis sufficient to

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sign three letters at the end of your name, which, like Archimedes's triangle, does wonders.

But, Sir, interest, no less than vanity, rules in this affair; a surgeon, who would crane his neck by way of physical bow, with a perriwig run to feed, and whose very foretop is an ambuscade for bugs, for half a guinea in the way of morning flebotomy, now rolls upon wheels, raises his price, and swears he will not take it as he has done, because he is now a fellow of the Royal and Antiquarian societies; but as his gracious majesty, God bless him, can make an officer and not a soldier, and a peer, though not a gentleman, so can he, and has he, dubb'd us men of science; whereas, I honestly tell you, that these are the books most of them read oftenest, at least, I am candid enough to answer for myself—so drink about, and let us finish the volumes.

One anecdote of us, and a merry one it is, I will inform you of, it is an history of itself, and you will best judge by that, how deserving many others may be of the honours thus conferred upon them.

A surgeon, now eminent, thanks to the title he gained here, and wearing a wig all bolus, once sat down to table, where, on dissecting a fowl, at some friend's house,
he

he found the bones all yellow—on enquiry, these bipeds had been accidentally fattened where madder grew in great abundance—necessity operates pretty near in the manner of genius, and so he cast about how to turn even this trifle to advantage, *dolus an virtus*—You know the rest.

Accordingly, he shut up one of these animals, (two, you know, would have spoiled the wonder) and, having forbid him all intercourse with other food than madder, he produced this miracle before a committee of the society, solemnly appointed to enquire into this arcanum of nature.

On dissection, the bones were, indeed, found yellow; the gentleman was admitted a fellow immediately, and the fowl being carried back, in great form, was relished the better over a bottle, because he had made fowls, or fools of us.—*si populus vult*.

Well, Sir, my house is ever open to you and friends—excuse my cavalier way of treating you, but I hate ceremony, and (among friends) if you chuse the idle feather we wear in our fool's caps, I think it no other, I will engage, by your producing a bit of stamped copper, rather unintelligible than not, to make you a faithful member of our community.

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But

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But I should have informed you, we are possessed of one piece of curiosity, and indeed antiquity. About a century since, a bible-fancier, for there are such, equally as pidgeon fanciers, left us, as a legacy, a set of every annotation from the then meridian of Pater-noster-Row ; by their being of no value, else would they have been sold for good claret, according to the custom of our society, have they been preserved and become pieces of antiquity, as all other editions of the same divine performances have long since been exploded, and o'course put under pies ; which made a wag, indeed, say, they were intended for *pious*, or *pye-house* uses, and so put to the first uses they were designed for, before they came to the last.

For the present, adieu ! we have a committee this evening, merely to find out, if possible, what sort of linen, if any, the Romans wore, and whether Augustus Cæsar, in the zenith of his power, had a shirt to his back, or a glass window to his palace—and so we parted.

But nothing, I hope, will part us ; so united, I think, is our friendship, in which hope I remain

Yours, &c.

LETTER

LETTER IX.

LONDON.

YOU may imagine me, almost, so much out of heart with my visit to the old antiquarian, that I was to expect but *lenten entertainment*, as Shakespeare has it, from a jaunt to the Royal Society, especially as I knew and was informed, the former had rose on the decay of the latter.

However, being determined to have the ocular proof of every thing, according to Othello, and not to trust the *ipse dixit* of those who might deceive, through interest or ignorance, no matter which, they are equally destructive, I went this morning and found the place, but, as Hamlet says, *no more like my father than I to Hercules*.

Instead of that venerable building I had some sort of reason to have expected, from hearsay, I found a regular fish-market, and, on asking where the original fabric of so many great and learned men once stood, was answered in a laugh, lord Sir, where have you lived all the days of your life? why there has not been any business done over-head, here, these fifty Years or more; there is a room indeed above, just kept through form sake, and to entitle the secre-

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tary,

tary, and other such idle useless officers, to receive their salaries—I know no more.

But pray friend, continued he, where is the difference? I rather think it in favour of us now—our ancestors, indeed, here, a century back, only dealt in cockle-shells, we sell the very thing; if they had the backbone, or jaw of a sturgeon, we have the solid fish, which, I think, is far better.—What is a lobster's claw, compared to this sprawling gentleman here? alive, alive, ho! and which is yours, if you want it, for a round shilling.

Then, turning about to the several passers to and fro, I heard nothing but, *Who'll buy? Who'll buy?* And this was all I could gain, or glean from this fellow of the Royal Society.—And so, having eat a few oysters, I threw the shells through the broken windows of the room he mentioned, there to be preserved for the honour of the house, among the other few relicks to be found there.

Shall I now, said I, cross the rubbish of so many uninhabited and desolate streets (as I found would be the case) to see the skeleton of a Musæum? Yes, I'll venture it, though internally feeling a kind of what the French call a *pressentiment*, that it was not worth the trouble.

This

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This once magnificent building had been an almost royal hotel, belonging to the great ducal family of the Montagues, but, even so long as an hundred years back, the town had so changed its situation, that it was purchased by parliament, after long being empty, as a repository for those curiosities, which, by being brought into a point, might be rendered more worthy the name of a Musæum, and, by obliging and entertaining foreigners (according to their several geniuses) in the end, do honour to the country.

Scarce an electoral prince, or German duke abroad, but has a repository of this kind; and it was long a scandal to this nation, that no such provision was made before.

Well, imagine me then arrived at this famous spot of science and intelligence, call'd the Musæum: would you believe, that the gates were all hurdled up, to prevent cattle creeping through them, as the wood-work was so destroyed by time and riots? However, a venerable old porter, and pensioner of Chelsea (observe, an old soldier is the only man, who, by being used to stand centry, can remain long in a place, and therefore fittest for this office) shewed me a private door, by which he said I might pass to
the

the only chamber of curiosities, if they were such, now left unfold.

Sold! said I, why aye, replied he, times were hard, many officers were kept here, who could not live, in their way, on the salaries they were to have, though, between friends, as originally intended, sufficiently large for philosophers and scholars, such as they ought to have been, had party not interfered, and blockheads stepped in, which indeed has been the ruin of this place; but idle, eating citizens were made secretaries and keepers here, and, rather than quit their old way of life, few people coming to see the place, by which means the fraud was too late discovered, away went the Othos, the fossils, and minerals, to purchase an haunch of venison in the season, and bottles of Burgundy, forsooth, to wash it down.

Picture to yourself, continued he, (I am still but a menial servant, yet can I feel a little for the decay of a place, which my predecessors have informed me was so eminent once, and such an honour to the nation) I say, only picture to yourself, how it must grieve an honest man to see a rich topaz of several ounces, here, parted with for as many ounces, almost of fresh butter, to grease the stomach of some voracious citizen, here, now raised to the honour of being
an

an officer in this house. Why, Sir, the leg of a phoenix (and no prince in Europe had a counterpart of such an amazing curiosity) was sold, to my knowledge, for a leg of a common goose, once. The cook's shop hard by, it being late at night, having nothing else—and this for a relisher, forsooth, to one of the fraternity, who loved a bottle or so towards midnight—that, falling asleep once, he burnt down one wing of the building. This, in the main, was of service to the common cause, as the fraud was never discovered, that the valuables therein, pretended to have been burnt, had been long before parted with to butchers and bakers.

The twelve Cæsars were turned into a dozen of wine, and that, perhaps, not of the best.—A fine statue of Venus commuted to current cash, and that but a small quantity too, perhaps the fourth of a guinea, paid a girl of the town for a night's lodging in this very house—I can swear to Belizarius fetching a few pence, with no less difficulty than the original did, when he opened his honest and tender hand to the hard heart of his own countrymen—And some of the very salt which Lot's wife left us (thanks to our Eastern travellers) went to a chandler's shop, to buy some of that English
com-

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commodity to corn a leg of mutton after the Westmoreland fashion.

The man would fain have gone on, would his tears have permitted; as Anthony observes, *Sorrow is catching*, for I was so affected myself, I could ask no more questions, nor hear any further answers—and so we parted.

Melancholy as the subjects of my letters are, yet do I hope the letters are in part pleasing, as coming from the heart, no less than hand of

Yours, &c.

P. S. I forgot to mention that the garden, once a collection of valuable plants, is now a skittle-ground—boxing matches are fought here frequently. What says our friend Virgil?

Quis talia fando?

LETTER X.

LONDON.

WHEN I finish a letter, I often, when too late to recall it perhaps, think of something which might have been added, and so pay you a second literary visit sooner, as a man who forgets his hat, cane, gloves, or handkerchief, returns quicker than he intended, not so much for the
the

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the real value of them, as to be ascertained if he left them there or no.

This, then, goes some days sooner, as I look on it a kind of postscript to my last, for having forgot my pocket book at the Musæum, I went back immediately, and my old friend, the porter, was not a little glad to see me, adding, I am now a kind of lord paramount here to day; unknown to me are all their engagements; but since I saw you, but an hour or two ago, all our secretaries and household are gone to a cricket match, a few miles off, and I can now inform you of many things which, this morning, it would have been almost high-treason to mention, and then whispered me, though, Heaven knows, it can never be said to be told in a whisper, because I think nothing was told at all.

When he spoke loud, I could articulately discover, that about a century since, when this establishment was first royally and parliamentarily made, two brothers, the eldest a duke, used to govern the kingdom so despotically, that the then monarch used to call them his two kings, and that himself was little else than doge of Venice—so fond was he of shew (nay, even the *shew of power*, after the reality had left him) that it is known (whisper again) for I was his grace's
porter

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porter—he would insist on noblemen and gentlemen sending empty coaches, to make up the thunder of a levee (at a great hotel near Lincoln's inn, now a cabinet warehouse) and I, who knew the secret, was forced to open the gate and bow to the coronet—as if, really, the owner was within it.

Now, Sir, (whisper again) these two men, it is said—for I am only a lodger, as the Irishman tells us, and so can be positive of nothing—were the overthrow of this once flourishing nation; and, as power and government must go somewhere, am told the country you came from will have it next—it bids fair for it; what is that to me? if the French drive us out, I can be driven with the rest—I warrant old Simkin, that was the droll fellow's name, will get his head into as good, if not better hole than this—and will be able to take the wrinkles out of his belly (a cant word for eating) in any part of the known world, or even *terra incognita*, if you come to that, (whisper again) for though I say it, who, perhaps, should not say it—and yet I do say it—I can, old as I am, give a Frenchman or Spaniard a knock wherever I meet him.

Even in a little way, these same brothers were the ruin of this very house, instead of having secretaries who could write, read, do honour

honour to our country in a kind reception of strangers, make lists of manuscripts, &c. &c. &c. we had the stupid cousins of parliament men, whose relations, male and female, were to do jobs of the court, and, in short (whisper again) we fell to nothing—by degrees, the nation followed, and I think you made a simple errand of it to visit us here, at a time when there was nothing to see but ruin and desolation.

On the death of the then king, God bless his gracious memory, I think he was the second in the Hanover line, a favourite stepped in, who acted worse than any of his predecessors; he not only followed their steps, but struck out another path himself. (Whisper again) it was during his time, a rascally peace was settled with our natural enemy of France, when we had them down, and might have kept them so.—From that moment they grew insolent, sent ambassadors over here, who laughed at us, saw through us, and grew strong of course, from our weakness, (whisper again) so that at market they undersold us in every article. In the field they out-numbered us, in the cabinet they out-witted us, and, in the affair of money, or money's worth, they out-bribed us.

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The king of those days was young, (I forget the exact year) and easily misguided by one, who, having taken every advantage of his infancy, and being of high prerogative principles, did of course instill these into him — The *sic jubeo sic voleo* was, at once, the law of the land; and, though a century before that time, a good but mistaken king lost his head, yet were there not wanting ministers, who would undertake the most hazardous of all experiments to please this favourite (whisper again) and judges who would make that absolute law, what formerly they would have suffered for, after the same manner they since made others.

One thing I have heard, I am now speaking against my own trade, that upon all occasions of riots, the military was introduced, even when not half necessary, and when a few constables might have dispersed them; but (whisper again) then the courtiers could not have feigned reasons to increase their force—ever disagreeable to the nation; however happy they are to see their fleets well manned, and which they never grudge a plentiful supply for—as being, indeed, the natural strength of the kingdom. The drawings and pictures, no less than printed books of that time, mention instances of
murder

murder being connived at, when committed wantonly by the military: in short, if we may believe the history of those days, every thing we feel the want of now, is owing to the unhappy mistakes a century ago, and which, like a broken constitution in the natural body, can never be entirely restored; however, by care and diet, and proper medicine, life may be rendered easy, 'till the time comes to lay it down.

America, Sir, would never have been the flourishing country it is, but from the ruins of this; from our rubbish they have laid the foundation of glorious fabrics. Heavens! (whisper again) was I young, as I am healthy, nothing should keep me here limping; and was I in your place, I would not stay a week, for, depend on it, there is as little to be seen elsewhere, as you have found here.

It is not my part (though I had a good school and even college education, for, Sir, it was my frolicksome genius which made me seek the army) to enter into things which, no doubt, you know so much better; on the contrary, I seem as a weak simple pupil before a learned preceptor. But this I know, that under the name of a free parliament, there seems to be no part of their freedom left but that of voting as they please; and no other species of liberty, but

that poor one of forging their own chains, (whisper again) and what can we expect otherwise? a stranger to the laws of his country in general, or the particular part of it, where he offers himself a candidate, at least to the trade, customs, and manufactures thereof, gallops down East, West, North, or South, carries a purse with him larger than his neighbour can produce, and so gets the hearts of his constituents as to be chose their representative.

And who are these long-pursed gentry? the sons of felons often, at least of beggars, who, running nearer the sun, get into golden climates, possess valuable jewels, often by cutting off the very finger of some Nabobkin, who wore the ring, and so, returning hence, become gentlemen and Esquires at once. Then, if their wives are alive, for women in all countries love title, get to be knights or baronets; the next step is Irish peerage, then into the house of lords here, and, by a few guineas well or ill bestowed (no matter, prove a pedigree at the Herald's office, beyond any Welchman, or French count, and so, (whisper again). But if you will do me the honour to call to-morrow, 'tis quite a leisure day, and I will be that man you would wish—in the mean time we must part, or I shall be observed; to-morrow

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morrow I'll find a fly corner. And so we parted, with a mutual promise of meeting again.

As you know my memory to be tolerable (though not so great as Cæsar's, who forgot nothing but injuries) you may almost depend upon this being the conversation between him, and

Your most, &c.

LETTER XI.

LONDON.

I Repeat to you what a treasure I am possessed of in my old corporal, otherwise, I must have run over the whole scattered town, and often run the hazard of being deceived in intelligence, for what was here collected every day into one point.

The idea I had of a porter only, has long since been removed; and indeed, on enquiry, his salary and emoluments are not so trifling, though far inferior to the deserts of a man, who, though by his youthful sallies, he forfeited the future profits of his education, by not taking orders, or entering the army in such a way as to rise of course, with the assistance of a little money, (the cursed military custom) yet did he still retain the

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best

best part, namely his retentive faculties and genius, to sort properly all he had read and heard, through a long length of days.

Our meetings are now become more punctual, if possible, than those of two lovers, and as ceremonies only belong to strangers, or men of little breeding, we began immediately.

I remember, said he, when the attack on Rochfort was first mentioned, I said it would never do, when I heard the names, and knew the real characters of those who were to head the enterprize; and as I had original papers and plans relative to the design, which, if not the most accurate, were better, I believe, than any they possessed; I offered to lay them before the m——y, and having no friend of consequence to forward the plan, I boldly went to the great house, and thought my merits a sufficient recommendation.—It should be so in business.

I should first have apprized you, that I had prepared the great man with a letter, signifying my intentions in the future visit, and that as it was an affair of such consequence (and, of course, secrecy) I waved being introduced by any man of fashion, as, in the very attempt to gain him, I must of course prostitute my reasons to several, and so the affair would become a prostitute indeed.

The

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The morning I went, I at least expected to have been known, I mean my intended visit; but, on the contrary, I was (after much uneasy standing and shifting of my legs) asked to sit by the hall fire, with an amphitheatre of footmen, who value visitors always, according as they pay what they call the fees of honour.

After three hours spent in this melancholy way, the great man happening to pass by, on his way to the garden (not on public affairs, of which he ever pretended such a share, as not to be seen in his coach or sedan without a paper in his hand, though but a list of vain governors to any hospital) saw me, took me by the hand, asked me how all friends in Suffex did.—I am a Kentish man, or man of Kent, said I, may it please your grace—Aye, well thought of, how does your brother, the clergyman, do, there? My brother is a tradesman in London, said I, in return—True, I remember now, and how does his trade go on? I can get him a good contract for boots and shoes for the army—My lord, unfortunately for him, he was a bellows-maker—Well, the artillery will want bellows—but now he is a wig-maker, and, unluckily, I find all the army are obliged to wear their own hair.—But, my lord, my visit is quite of another kind,

it is not to ask, but grant services. I have brought the papers relative to the expedition against Brest, which I mentioned in my letter, and am ready to be examined before any committee of the navy, the army, house of commons, or privy council.

Why, you must leave the papers with my secretary, I have all Europe's business on my poor shoulders, and cannot attend to such trifles. At this, my choler rose—What, my lord, is it a trifle to vulnerate our common enemy in so vital a part? Is it not better, by one so capital a stroke, to put an end to an expensive war, and overthrow their present and future schemes, than to linger on as we do, campaigning it without conquest, and taking the field without taking any thing else; bleeding at every vein, 'till, at length, not a drop of blood will be left in our whole body? Why, Sir, I cannot enter into particulars now—you would pity me, did you know my exact situation—every thing on my poor head and heart; I bleed for my country—then the rogue wept—however, leave your papers, they shall be examined, and yourself amply rewarded.

Would you, as you seem now, a studious and retired man, rather have a set of apartments at Windsor or Hampton? Perhaps, though as you are of an active turn,
 Kenning-

Kensington would suit you better—true, you would then be nearer your friends, and the amusements of London would recreate you, after hours of study and application. Well, leave your papers—Kensington and a good pension is the thing.

I was fool enough to do so: the papers were detained two years, at least, and when I received them, were so daub'd and thumb'd, that it was almost impossible to discover what they ever had been. My rural apartments, whenever I applied for them, were just filled up: I was ever blamed for being an hour too late. And, in short, a shameful peace proved we never meant to be heartily active, and I, at last, found every man, with only a single vote for a distant borough, getting closet admittance at once, while I was kept in the hall among a brigade of rascally footmen, and had that in my pocket all the time, which would have made the cabinet of Paris tremble.

As I have done with the world, for my candle, young gentleman, is almost extinguished, thank heaven! I will let you have possession of these papers, for some days at least; and at my death, will leave them to you as a legacy; I seem to have nobody near me I so much value—'till that day arrives, I own I have some little pleasure in overlooking

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them, and fancying what might have been done, at least, though never attempted.

And now can you wonder, with all this decay of virtue for near a century past, that our once flourishing city is in the unsightly situation you see it? am amazed it is not entirely erased, like those of Sodom and Gomorrah! and, from what I have proved in these trifles of mine, do imagine (and am left pretty shrewdly to guess) that many a public plan for the honour of the kingdom, and safety of the reigning family, has been laid aside, merely because they would not serve the particular person who presented it, and who had no farther demerit than that his wife's cousin's brother, perhaps, voted against them and their cause, fifty years since—a fine reason truly.

A certain witty earl used to say, *He loved to visit men out of power, because they could not do him a mischief.* I fear human nature, at least that part which this country has to boast of, is such; and that the pursuits after power (at the expence of health, wealth, conscience, honour, &c. &c.) are more to punish enemies than reward friends.

But suppose (by way of change to our mutual ideas) that we postpone our next meeting for a week or so, you will then, by going about, see, with your own eyes, how
far

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far I am just or unjust in my characters of men and things, perhaps I may deceive you—In the mean time too, I shall be better able to collect my ideas, and better inform you—take my advice, and I will write to you when our next meeting shall be.

I was not sorry, my dear friend, for the hint he gave me, my next will be from the observation of my eyes, 'till then,

Adieu.

LETTER XII.

LONDON.

NOTHING makes a man so true to his appointment, next to curiosity, as interest; I know not where I could have found such a living history as in my old corporal—and, as one of the conspirators in Shakespear's Cæsar says, (when he pushed to have the elder Cinna of their party) *His silver hours will purchase us a good opinion.* So was I so truly prejudiced in favour of this person; that I was tempted to believe every article he advanced.

Imagine

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Imagine me, then, in the octagon room, before even the door was opened—Trim (I will call him so in the course of these letters) had given me the hint not to wait long at the outward door, the better to avoid suspicion (the daily sustenance of poor and vulgar minds) but to walk up boldly, and if I did not see him, to feel for the key in a little cunning corner, best understood between us, and which I was prevented doing, this time, at the instant I had intended it, by the sudden and unexpected appearance of my worthy Mentor.

Chairs ranged, table fixed, pen and ink at hand, I took the liberty, as I had his leave now for so doing, to give him the clue of our intended subject—and begged to know of him the cause of such a general decay in religion, inasmuch that, as I had observed in passing, scarce a church but had its tower in ruins; nor did I hear the voice of prayer hardly any where, but in boarded tabernacles.

Trim, then, wiping his eyes with the corner of his coat, for he wept at the question, began thus:

The desire which poor people in this country have of seeing one, or perhaps their only son, a gentleman, makes them endure patiently any difficulties to breed their darling a clergyman. The schoolmaster (next
to

to his ignorant nurse) is the instigation of this—proving, if swearing can bring it so about, that Bobby is a great genius, and must (if bred to the church) be a pillar thereof.

Accordingly, he eats and drinks himself into degrees, and having taken the first, thinks it high time to declare an invisible inspiration, and so gets ordained, that he may be in the way of picking up a penny, as a re-imbursment for the expence of such a length of education.

With an *Whole-duty-of-man* visage, and a *country-pious-pensioner* wig, he sets off for London—and, like a true apostle, without scrip or purse—sleeps at the old inn in Holborn, runs in debt even to the poor shoe-black, and being hard pushed, frequents that office of church intelligence, where, by consenting to pay pawnbroker's interest, he gets a list of those idle clergy who hate morning and evening prayers, and so, as every recruiting serjeant says, enters into good pay and free quarters.

After spouting the Litany about twelve times each day, he begins to find, that not the toil, but confinement of fixed hours, is his greatest misfortune.—As, for instance, now he wants to see (as being a stranger in town) the guard relieved at St James's, and
hear

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hear a kind of flying concert for nothing; no, the fates forbid—and he must be in St. Giles's desk (ready surplised) exactly at that unlucky hour. Again, at four, he would wish to see Garrick figure away in Macbeth—and the house will be brimfull, running over, in a few minutes after door opening—No, he must be in St. Andrew's burial ground exactly at that instant; and, as every dirty carpenter of an undertaker looks upon himself as commanding officer over a poor itinerant clergyman, the divine messenger of the gospel is detained in the back room of an ale-house, two hours extraordinary, because, forsooth, one of the chief mourners had an auction to get rid of first, before he could weep for his departed friend.

Tired of this attendance and dependance, he is now a candidate for a lectureship; hoists a new wig, and mounts a set of fresh robes on the occasion—tick for that; but this he had been used to—he loses it by a vote, is arrested, and so, immediately (as being a man of genius) enlists himself in the service of some Pater-noster-row prince of villainy, begins annotations to a new bible, and, at last, his works come among that list of preserved curiosities of bibles I mentioned.

By

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By such a blot in his escutcheon, observe, he never runs higher than a Jamaica parish, or, if he will linger after home, gets, at most, the deputy chaplaincy of some regiment—and, by these means, becomes neither officer or clergyman—but a kind of amphibious priest, following St. Paul to a tittle, and being *all things to all men*.

Thus he will swear with those who swear, drink with those who drink—nay, even pray with her (and there it is an office he admires) who wants private genu-flexion and closet divinity.

Thus, by taking the wrong path, few men of genius ever gain that step on preferment's ladder, which would make them heard with attention, and feared by example—for, if once he had real preferment, he must play the hypocrite, and whatever he privately thinks, in public practice only what is right, or the war kettle (as I call it) will boil, and all the old women of the parish will tear him to pieces—at least his reputation, which is worse torture, perhaps, than St. Andrew's cross and hot pincers.

Another cause of the decay in Christianity of late years, nay, for this century past, is, that advowsons, and next presentations, are purchased for fools, and fools of course enjoy them—The very moment he is ready,
(nay,

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(nay, often before, as those things are but too frequently settled by churchmen in the closet) a pulpit is ready for him, his copied divinity is immediately believed, because he can stamp it with the indelible mark of venison and claret. Nobody outwardly disbelieves or opposes a gentleman at the head of his own table. What a sanctification of paltry knowledge in divinity is a flowing bowl? The punch and theology of such an host are swallowed with equal gust.

Our subject grows so copious, said old Trim, that I must beg you, for the present, to commit on paper what I have told you for this time, and to take a walk or two round our quondam garden, 'till I go down stairs to regulate some trifles there, in the way of my office; my stay shall be no longer than while you minute down what has passed, and I'll engage my next dish of ecclesiastical politics shall be a standing one, and so adieu for an hour, at farthest.

I was not sorry for a little relief, and have since learnt, his politeness was often the occasion; for, on enquiry, (not knowing whether tobacco might not be offensive to me) he secreted himself under the mask of private business, to smoke a private pipe. Be happy, said I.

By

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By this liberty I have obtained of chusing my own subjects, I shall, my dear friend, be a better correspondent, and wish for nothing more, than to merit your kind attention in every thing which chance or industry may put in the power of

Your, &c.

LETTER XIII.

LONDON.

WITHOUT any preamble, as we daily grow more and more intimate, my corporal, this morning, at once resumed the thread of his discourse, and began.

Another cause of the intire overthrow in religion here, a century since, and which never could get its head up again, was the m——r tying down each bishop to keep his choice sugar-plum places of preferment, for those who voted according to his own measures.

By these means, the leading man in any borough, supposing his son ever such a blockhead, was sure of that preferment, on his taking orders; which led immediately
to

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to a mitre: such as a dignity in some country or town cathedral—while, according to that line of Pope, he learns

“ I’o tatter’d crape, the drudgery of prayer.”

The nobility now too, who once slighted the profession of the black-art, began to feel the secrets of it, had bred their youngest son, at least, to the trade—sure of beginning well by being chaplain in ordinary at once—a sub-almoner, or deputy clerk of the closet—Feathers as these are, yet, if their quills are well shaped, they will write a fair hand; even such as majesty shall read at their leisure, if ever they read at all.

But the sect of passion-movers, I mean the Methodists, helped, more than all, to throw our steeples down to the ground. The indolence of our then clergy, reading other people’s sermons, which these preached extempore, and, of course, more nobly struck on the right chord of each passion, was a clencher to those opinions which were formed (and not unreasonably) of religion in general—and I was prophet enough to tell my tutor so near fifty years ago, for which he never forgave me, but secretly bosomed (nobody, as is the adage, being so vindictive as a churchman) that revenge which appeared

appeared some months afterwards in rustication, and from thence to expulsion.

It was then I sought the opposite extreme of the army, and, having a mathematical head, was determined to wave that interest I had, or to make use of the money I then could command, to gain a commission dishonourably, so I entered as a private man. My pay I never touched, but laid it out in books of gunnery and fortification, to instruct intirely the corporals and serjeants; but even the officers, who, many of them (mean and with old college debts, or with the load of a family) would not be at the expence of a preceptor, or even the poor apparatus I was master of.

At hours from business I taught the young recruits those foreign exercises which books, transmitted from abroad and re-published here, explained to me. But I seem too familiar in my own praises, and most of my comrades being dead, the truth can hardly be known by any contemporaries—But believe me, Sir, that though I laid a scheme for taking Brest, and proved it so feasible as to be adopted, yet, as I never obtained any thing higher than a corporal's knot, and all, forsooth, because my cousin's wife's uncle voted against the m——r in a famous election.

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Such was the situation of the army then at present I fear it is no better. The sum of family money I then possessed, at full age was sunk in thus being a volunteer, which had it been early applied, would have secured my first commission; and, like others I should then have stepped on quickly, could I have brook'd voting myself, or gaining votes, for the favourite or his minister—I don't recall the word, Sir, I say his minister—for I have long since seen, known, and proved, that kings, all over Europe, are merely the round O, which gives the figure its consequence.

After my expulsion (so great was my thirst for military knowledge) I even entered the service of the master general of the ordnance, merely to catch hold of an apparatus *gratis*, which my poor purse could never put me in possession of—But alas! to my great surprise, instead of seeing a gallery set apart for globes, quadrants, and the necessary tools of such a military study, I found only a window-seat study, consisting of an odd volume or two of the Spectators, a few occasional plays, the last collection of Vauxhall songs, and a few fiddle-strings tied round an old German flute.

This great officer, I found, had no less than five boroughs at his command—No wonder

wonder he so early then succeeded to such a post—but I remember, as a clincher to his character, that Bland's military discipline, Muller on fortification, and other books of equal use and character, lay on his table with the leaves not opened, though I found they had been bought near three years.

What improvements, Sir, could I not have made, back'd with so much leisure as *maitre d'hotel* is supposed to have, and really was—joined to my own inclination, and those abilities even my enemies allowed me, at that bright day of youth—for all they could allege against me was, that I was idle and buckish; but this did not, in any shape, impeach my abilities.

I believe it was six months that I lived with this great officer, and on taking my departure was just as wise as I entered, allowing only for what I gleaned, by daring to open the leaves of these so long neglected books.

But it was during this season that I laid before him (as I had been young at an academy near it) a plan of taking the harbour and citadel of Brest. I proved to him, by plans taken on the spot, that an insurmountable weakness remained, which nature had designed, and which my friends (who assisted me in the undertaking) had

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pointed out to me, myself being too young to make such sentimental observations.

My plans, approved by him, were, as he said, laid before the then king, who was military wise and virtuous. But alas! tho' the scheme, by a d—n'd peace (that of Fontenbleau I mean) was laid aside, I found I never should have had the least advantage by it, for my worthy and noble master had given in the plan as his own, and my name never was once mentioned in it. You know the old saying, *sic vos non vobis*.

Why I call it (begging their honours pardon, who were the carpenters who formed it) a d—n'd peace, is, because, when we had driven the French into a corner, and they were down on bended knees, we gave them their own terms; and then—but let us postpone this affair 'till another time, as I must refer to some private papers for that information, so necessary to such discoveries—so adieu for the present.

And, pray am I not happy in finding such a friend? Make me no less so, by accepting this my intelligence with the same warmth I offer it: and

Believe me

Yours.

LETTER

LETTER XIV.

LONDON.

THE mental entertainment my invalid friend and ally gave me, as I mentioned in my last, was such, that you may imagine I was not impunctual to my second visit—more especially as it was of his own appointing.

Accordingly, I met him as he was standing at the door to wait my arrival, by way of privacy ; for, added he (and which, by-the-bye, is the reason I am in no higher station) I ever was stiled a chattering party-mad fellow, or else I should not have been expelled from college so soon, but have been a good Methodist preacher, perhaps, at the worst, and filled my pockets from the half-penny dish—as others do, and will do, while the majority of human nature is inclining to folly—in other words, novelty and superstition.

My old Mentor, I will call him such while we are thus together, and I am his pupil—had me up several back stairs, through many private apartments, 'till at last we reached, as he called it, the haven of rest.

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It was a small octagon room, overlooking the once hills of Hamstead and Highgate, now metamorphosed to squares and princely streets—No sooner had we entered, but he said, in his usual droll accent, “The devil
“may overlook Lincoln, and I believe he
“does, but I’ll defy him, with the help of
“his friend Foote, to inspect us in this
“retreat.”

Some little ceremonies adjusted, he began. Am sorry to rob you of that share of conversation your rank and knowledge must naturally command; but as my memory is not so strong as some thirty years since, nor my faculties so lively—as you may well imagine—therefore, Sir, permit me only to go on in a chain of my own making, and don’t break a link by any interruption, and I will engage to speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help me this: on which he took a bumper of that liquor, which, being coloured, would be called a cordial—but in its plain state and condition, was neat brandy.

You must know, Sir, the business of this nation being carried on by numbers, and not the reason of the thing; the court never consider the justice or the merit of any cause, or how the populace (which, in fact, ought to be a little attended to) relish such
or

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or such a point in question—on the contrary, 'tis asked how the king's scholars, as we call them, carried it—by what majority, and whether the opposite party are sick of the affair.

Now, for instance, should it thunder, and the court had a mind to prove it otherwise, great debates would arise of course, the nature and dreadful consequences of thunder would be explained by the country or patriotic party; immediately the opposition prove it was the noise of wheel-barrows on the roof of the house, some workmen being then busy in repairing it; when it being put to the vote, it stood—for the

Wheel-barrows 340

Thunder - - 45

So the wheel-barrows had it, hollow too, as the gentlemen of the turf call it. Why, Sir, I have known things ten times more strange and preposterous practised every hour; which made the witty lord Wharton (when the whole bench of *right reverend fathers in God* had all forsworn themselves on a certain affair well known in history) say—That he knew but two things out of the reach of an English parliament—one was to make a man a woman—and the

F 4

other,

other, to frame an oath which a priest would not swallow.

This was, as I have been told, on the expulsion of bishop Atterbury, above an hundred and fifty years since; the then minister, Sir R——, was jealous of this great divine's abilities in the upper school, and knowing that he should ever be opposed by such superior talents of head, and insurmountable integrity of heart—immediately set his wits to work how to get him out of the kingdom.

What can't a minister do? who knows he is to have a fresh reward for every fresh undertaking; and who also knows, that he is strengthened below by every force of votes, money, troops, and each species of hirelings. However, this point was carried, private letters were to be examined by an office and proper officers, erected for that purpose, called a Decypherer's—and here party run so high, that his explanation of each paragraph was to be gospel—and it was gospel, accordingly.

Now I'll suppose, for instance, I wrote to you to get me a pair of Morocco slippers, immediately this divine officer swears that this has a political meaning, and means supplying the emperor of Morocco with money, so that he may live without being beholden
to

to Gibraltar, for taking off provisions from his country.

Soon after this I send to you for a Dutch dog, or a sett of Delft ware—immediately the council meet at midnight (and the full of the moon) when the proper officers being introduced, 'tis their opinion, sanctified by divine authority, that the States of Holland are signified typically under these expressions.

Again I want, by the first ship, and first opportunity, a dozen of Burgundy or Champaign, to regale a friend or two. No sooner do I write this letter, but of course it is intercepted before it reaches the post-office—my servant being a spy on me, and so employed by this minister—and this being read most solemnly, as solemnly is it declared, that I mean the regiments of Burgundy and Champaign are to be the vanguard of the intended invasion: this being meant under the words first ship and first opportunity.

'Tis in vain to add any more proofs of such unaccountable methods of proceeding; but this I know, that ever since the expulsion of this great man, merely from his superiority of genius, they are determined never to have but one conjurer in the whole knot, and he is the decypherer I speak of.

The

The minister gloried in his conquest, of course—the good bishop quitted his temporalities and spiritualities like a man and a Christian, adding, *The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the Name of the Lord!*

But I forgot one anecdote to the honour of a young member of the house, at that time, who opposed, with all his eloquence, the attainder of this good and great man. In the course of his debate he observed, with equal degree of justice and wonder, that his brethren of the law were more eager in his persecution than any other, and that this descended, of course, to the dregs of the clergy. Is it not (I have often read the speech in my old tutor's room, when I meant to be a scholar and a gentleman, but was seduced by ill company) strange, said he, that men set apart, by their profession, for mercy and forgiveness, should be the first in the chase of persecution here? But they certainly follow those mistaken notions of the poor Indians, who think, when they have murdered a good man, they inherit his good qualities.

But, however, they robbed this good man of his liberty—they could not of his virtues—and though they banished him his native country, yet could they not banish from him
his

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his merits—he died with these as he had lived—adored for them when in being, and revered for them no less in the grave. In short, trifling as many m———l persecutions may seem at first to particulars, they, in the end, fall heavy on the nation in general. And I know not whether the teazings and oppositions of one Wilkes, near a century past, is not the cause of some disturbance in the minds of men, even now.

But happiness is never compleat, for I see by that coach bending this way that I must descend—and, perhaps, be detained an hour or two—too long for you to wait; but, as you know the way now, call when you like—it cannot be too often. When it rains, and you are not better employed, pass this way—I'm an Englishman, though the country seems to have left us. Farewell then, for the present—to-morrow will be a new day (with us at least) and yet, some how or other, every day seems the same.

I took my hat, gave him my hand, promised to see him to-morrow, if possible—if not—the first fair day, and fairer opportunity.

The sooner this happens, the sooner (as the result ever pleases you) will it ever please

Your affectionate.

LETTER

LETTER XV.

LONDON.

SORRY as I was, in one respect, to lose the society of my good friend the corporal; yet time will end (which lord Bolingbroke calls the physician of brutes) was also mine—as I soon discovered his reasons. The few members left in their society began to be jealous; not of the discourse we held, had they really known it, but from a fear of what we might have entertained ourselves with, relative to their frauds and abuses; for I learnt that, but a few days since, they had a feast, where a dish of peas only, came to three pounds three shillings; and this was extracted from a sett of medals (and a perfect one) of the upper empire. No wonder then my so politic friend gave the hint (though so properly concealed) as hardly to be distinguished.

My first visit then was to the Tower of London; on entering, I found the lions were, long since, gone to the dogs—but the keeper of them had a pretty fine-cure of it, and held it *in commendam*, with a commissionership of some public office.

My

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My disappointment here would have been lucky, as to myself, but having some ladies with me; they can't bear any baulk to their fancy, and frequently, as it appeared afterwards, they lamented not having seen the dear, dear lions!

Observe, my visit was to examine records; but the ladies where I lodged, who had so often rallied me for going abroad alone, as they called it, in other words, without them, now clung to me like ivy, which, as lord Bolingbroke observes in his Letters on Banishment, may be ornamental to the tree, but in time destroys it; for already I find myself lickt in for a day's coach-hire, three carriages, a tavern dinner, and most likely an opera for the evening.

While I delivered them into the hands of a young cousin of mine, to draw them off from the serious path I was treading, in order to let them tread the flowery one of pleasure, (such as seeing crowns, scepters, &c. &c. &c.) I ran, my allotment of time being short, to see, what I ever esteemed most curious, the records of such an amazing kingdom as this must once have been; but, on interrogating some of the old wardens, whom I was forced to commit a violence on, by first waking them, before I could get an answer, I found that all papers of this kind
had,

had, long since, been transported to America, he foreseeing it would be, some future day, become the *seat of empire*; and do believe, (said the old velvet-headed Cerberus) that it will soon be the case; yet my fear is, they will not accept our king to rule them, but chuse one of their own: by which means we, who bought in, at a severe price too, shall lose our bread; for, no doubt, their king will chuse his own body-guard.

There are a collection of papers (said he) still.—How far they are of use to a speculative man, like your honour, I know not.—If you chuse to see them, this is the key.—Open the door, and satisfy your curiosity.—From the quantity of vermin, which I hear is in the chamber, I am afraid to go in.—Why, Sir, there are rats, properly Norway ones, but, out of derision, called Hanover, who would eat us up alive—emblematical (this in a whisper though) of some folks from that country, who have most unbounded appetites.—Well, I care not who hears me—I bought in, and have no obligation to any courtier, though, G-d forgive me, I did much of their dirty work for twenty years and more.

Why, Sir, I was in the excise, and planted in a part of the country, where elections were generally carried on with strange opposition

position—a vehemence of party scarce to be described, and which has, in fact, been the ruin of this once-glorious country. Would you believe it, Sir? I have had letters from a lord, to run about from house to house, and spread whispers to the disparagement of good men, and the praise of those I knew to be the blackest of all men on the face of the earth; yet, if this was not done, out we must go, perhaps with disgrace—I mean that kind of disgrace, as would prevent a man getting his bread in any other way. But this commission of flandering was only local here. When the court had a mind to make an admiral or a general officer odious to the whole kingdom, in a minute, away went the *lettres de cachet*, as the French call them, and every village of England, in less than ten days, was ready to do the dirty work of bespattering.

In less than twenty-four days the same reached Scotland, to the extremest fir-tree, and Ireland even in the centre of a bog.

What shall we say!--Look on the Thames, Sir!—Why, in my little memory of fifty years, a man could hardly see the opposite shore for groves of shipping. Where is there a vessel now larger than a fishing smack? Even the ferry here, farmed in my memory
at

at some hundreds a year, now scarce pays the man his daily bread. In short, Sir, I should not speak so openly, but that I am in treaty about the sale of my idle place here, and with the purchase-money I mean, old as I am in years, though young perhaps in your understanding, to pass over to that country, which I hear will best put me in mind of Old England—I mean New England.

Why, Sir, without trade, what shall we be? Provisions high, taxes insupportable, and rents above double their value, which encrease lodgings in proportion. Sure I am we must sink to nothing, and indeed it is near the low-water mark now.

Manufactures, as you know, no doubt, (for you seem the merchant all over) must be cheaply wrought, or markets will be overstocked by those countries, who have equal skill, and who can live for half the expence: that nation will, assuredly, get an universal trade first, who can soonest and easiest supply the demands of its inhabitants; and I will own (for I know the country—having travelled, in my youth, as steward to a young nobleman) that the lot of a poor man (I mean a working one) is happier in any country than in England—I mean with regard to the necessaries of life.

If

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If I work in Germany, my drink is good Rhenish—here, must I pay as much for a quart of mud, as would buy me three of that comforting wine. In France I have oil, wine, and of course vinegar—can I starve, then? No! 'tis luxury, Sir, if my garden affords me a sallad, and my oven a good loaf—compared to a draught of *whistle belly* small beer, here, and a lettuce with only a little dry salt.

In compensation for all this, I am told, I live in a land of liberty.—What is this boasted liberty? If I either speak, or write my thoughts (not that I think myself capable of either) away must I march to Newgate! be attached to convict myself—in other words, have an inquisition to sit on me, and be asked questions I know no answers to, and yet must find them.

Well, Sir, there is no end of this subject—and do suppose you are master of every part of it—Therefore! I repent, if you chuse to go into the vermin-chamber, this is your passport—But, on my word, I can't pretend to follow or accompany you. But it will abate your curiosity a little, when I tell you, that all the records, here, are weekly papers, and periodical works—seized about a century ago! And, among them,

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some

some books in better condition than one would expect, called the Political Register.

Why this happened, was owing to its excellent composition, which made some gentlemen often go up to read it—And, taking a fancy to the performance, they gave orders to have them contained in a strong iron chest—They are the best history of those times, and, as it is a century since, we are left to judge, how the first seeds were sown of those unlucky fruits, which poisoned posterity so universally ever since.

But your ladies I see have quitted the shew-rooms, as I call them. I have a brother who is porter at the Musæum, I wish you would call on him; he will enlarge on the subject—for he has time and wit at will.

My warder was happy when he found I knew him—Then, whisper'd—But! one and the other of us, depend upon it, truth will come out—and so we parted for the present.

Don't you think I am in luck, my dear friend! to meet with such living dictionaries—Let me but live in your friendship, still, and no man is happier than

Your, &c.

LETTER

LETTER XVI.

LONDON.

WHAT a magazine of magazines, and other such lumber, must I have pioneered, by removing such quantities of rubbish, had I not met with these two brothers to give me such living information. I declare! of an unfortunate, I seem to think myself a fortunate man—Unfortunate! to take such a *wild-goose* journey to see nothing—And yet, fortunate, to meet with those who could tell me what had been—And, indeed! the motto for the city arms should be *fuimus*.

I had now a mind to see into the nature of trade a little—And the first morning of leisure, which was the present one, I entered a linen-draper's shop, partly to buy some trifle—chiefly to enquire into the rise and progress of that staple manufacture, if not in this yet in a neighbouring island.

On entering the shop (I beg his pardon, 'twas a warehouse) I expected somebody or other would have accosted me in the way of interest, *with a what do you chuse to buy?* or at least politeness to know, if I did not want to find the number of any particular house, the person who dwelt there, or the name of some adjacent street.

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But

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But in the centre of the shop (blunder again, for it is a warehouse—Yet, if I mistake again, you know my meaning) one of the partners in a surplice, like a singing man of some cathedral, was sitting in a kind of *tooth-pick* way, with a magazine in his hand—and said, Sir, when I am out of this necessary man's hands, I will call one of my apprentices to serve you.

In a few minutes he struck with his foot (by the bye one should think he might have done this before, as his *said foot* was not far from him) and a livery servant appearing, laced like a *parish-beadle*, he said, call Mr. Thomson; Sir, replied the servant, he is in the middle of his lesson with Mr. *De-giardini*—Well! then answered the master, bid Mr. Atkins come; Sir, answered the servant again, he is gone to the *riding-house*, and 'twill be two hours ere he returns, as I know he will call at the fencing school.

Is this, said I (to myself tho') the system of trade in general, or only a particular part of it? or is this rather the spot of ground where my ancestors (many of them at least) raised such fortunes by industry, by patrimony, by perseverance?

On the master of the shop's quitting the hands of his *griffeur*; he said, Sir, am
sorry

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Sorry to leave you, thus—but one of our theatres opens to-night. The four managers have had a pamphlet war all the vacation—and now we shall see who is in the right or the wrong—'tis expected they will all make their appearance, and speak different prologues or apologies to the town—In short, Sir, the house is expected to be full almost before the doors open—To-morrow I will serve you with any thing you want. At present, *Je suis votre tres—*You speak French, no doubt! Adieu! *Mon ami—à revoir—à revoir—à revoir.*

Shall I now, said I, give over any further pursuits of this kind, by supposing all tradesmen of this age are alike? or, shall I once more prick in the lottery-book, and take my chance of a blank? I will try once more.

I entered now a very different branch of business—'twas a cheesemonger's. I expected, as was the case formerly, to have found an industrious, hard-fisted fellow, in a blue apron and white night-cap—But, alas! he had a bag-wig and solitaire—His shirt was lengthened with laced ruffles—And on his finger was a jarcle (as Othello has it) *richer than all his tribe.*

As I was determined to take down this important cypher of a fellow, I asked him

for an *half-pennyworth* of cheese—then I was answered with a bell-ringing, and not a very slight one. On which a black foot-boy came—His master said, Nero, take the gentleman's half-penny—round a bit of cheese exactly to the dimensions of it, and then go to clean the plate again.

My cane languished to smooth his behaviour a little—but, as I still found a certain place remained, called the Crown Office, I walked slowly out—saying nothing to avoid a *Libel*, but *Ob! Tempore! Ob! Mores!*

What, said he! do you call me a trumpery fellow, and my wife, a whore? I can prove both a libel—You shall be attached to answer it—'Tis the short way of dealing with such impertinents—You shall not have the privilege of a jury.

And what, answered I, has the nation lost that best of its liberties? My ancestors, Sir, struggled above a century past, to maintain that privilege at the expence of blood, much more treasure—And—

I was now agreeably interrupted with a smile from my quondam antagonist—who, having looked hard at me, took me by the hand—and in another tone, replied—

If any of your ancestors struggled for liberty—and, more particularly to defend trials by juries, I honour you as their descendant

dant—To tell you the truth, as I serve two lord *chief justices*, one of the tables at court, and several of its dependants, I am taught to talk in this way, sorely against my will tho'—was I to pretend to a single ray of patriotism, I should not only lose all this custom, but never get in a farthing of my court debt, which is now at least nine quarters in arrears—once let me give them a receipt in full, and they may send for their milk (as we say) to the cow-house—Lord, Sir, for your complexion bespeaks from whence you came—what could possess you to come into such a sunk and still sinking country as this? Could I but once get off my little stock in trade, Old England should never see me again—Don't imagine, Sir, the idle dress I wear is an affair of choice. I have pictures of my ancestors who are plain as tradesmen ought—but, if I was unlike my neighbours, no soul would enter my shop—I should be called the odd fellow—the anti-deluvian merchant—Observe, Sir, we are all merchants, now, and every shop is a warehouse—Observe my neighbour over the way, she has scarce three yards of ribbon, or more than three caps in her window; and yet it is called the *Cap-Warehouse*—But, Sir, jesting apart, if I have offended you, I ask your pardon seriously—And, if you'll do me the

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favour to pass an evening here, some day this or next week, I will obliterate, by future kindness, all former rudeness, and explain to you (well as I can) how things are as you see them.

My stay, I fear, answered I, is too short in London, to admit of such an interview—nor can I so well reconcile to myself, how you can so soon be, as Falstaff calls it, a *Double Man*—But, if possible! No less to shew you how I can rise superior to such unpoliteness—Your very friends would confess as much—and, at the same time, to listen to that instruction, I want, and would fain receive at your hands—I will endeavour to see you.

The sooner the better, said he, with a smile—If England has left me, I have not left it—Nay! indeed, whenever I do, my heart, and independant spirit, shall go with me—To a particular friend, like yourself, I can be, and will be, the Englishman; but, to the town, here, I may as well refuse putting up lights on a party-day, as appear to them the man I appear to you.

We now parted—the day was too far spent to admit of further visits of this kind—Nay! indeed, I was led to imagine the search was equally idle thro' the whole town—for, as I walked home, I found every tenth warehouse,

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house, as they call it, a music one—The windows clouded with new ballads, guitars, German flutes, *Viols D'Amore*, &c. &c. &c. insomuch, that I could hardly discern whether the place was inhabited or not.

Before I conclude this, let me thank you for the kind punctuality of all your answers—At the same time, congratulating you on the recovery of your health from so violent a fit of illness as you have represented it.

If life is worth enjoying, 'tis with the tenure of good health, that you may enjoy both, for the sake of yourself and friends, is the ardent wish of

Your, &c.

LETTER XVII.

LONDON.

ON the nearest inspection, what with my two old brothers at the Tower and Musæum, and I find the same from my good friend and ally the cheesemonger, its decay, nay absolute ruin of this country, was much owing to the race of lawyers there,

there, at that time ; I mean about a century since.

Near an 100 of these were senators of the lower house—Lord Bacon early prophesied, that a constitution must be near its end, when too many of these gentry get within the walls of St. Stephen—for, added he, these men are so used to be concerned on one side and the other—and often, on both sides, that, at last, they are indifferent which side they take, or whether they take any side at all, provided they are paid for it.

Next to a race of illegal judges—I mean those who neither understood, or dispensed law—No age, ever since the conquest, ever saw such lists of council—One, particularly ! so says Tradition, got, and very justly too, the name of Sir *Bull-face Double-fee*, merely from his so impudent forehead, and being known publickly to accept bribes on both sides the question—He held once a very considerable post under the crown ; but even in that age some degree of modesty was still left ; and he was superseded, because he exceeded the dirty jobs they stood in need of—You are worse than we desire, replied the then minister—We want a man, to be sure, who will stick at nothing, to serve our cause, but you have no discretion in your perfidy—Therefore ! you must
submit

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submit to be superseded by one not less ingenious in villainy than yourself, but rather with more caution—The man who leaps over the stick, should occasionally boggle a little—make believe, for form's sake, that it sometimes is held too high for him, and may endanger his shins—But, hold the stick as we will, you clear it—nay! will do it backwards, equally as forwards.

As this fellow never knew what honour was, being of a very servile extraction, so did he never feel losing one of the most glittering posts in the law—Money was *the God of his Idolatry*—But, as Pope says,

“ In one! a reservoir to catch and spare—

“ Anon! a fountain spouting thro' his heir.

Whatever points the ministry had to carry, a groupe of lawyers were ever ready, to soothe them with opinions adequate to their measures—Those who had not a yard or two of silk, to make their gown of, studied to supersede the opinions of those who had, in order to obtain it—Thus the number, which used to be moderate, was increased of course, and this fell heavy on private causes, as these gentry had silken prizes for their services, who otherwise could only have obtained woollen ones.

As

Acts of parliament, and precedents, were all set aside, to make way for new opinions—founded neither on law or equity—but merely the whim of time-serving scoundrels, who leapt each gate they might have gently opened—Even murder was by them held legal—Nay! so eager were they to lick the spittle of their superiors, by which they might, as it is said, have the favourable ear of the court, that it has been known a justice of peace was commended, after much pleading in his favour, for—But I think you have all these affairs framed and glazed, at your country retreat, and so I will enter into no particulars on that head.

Juries, the usual and necessary safe-guard of each cause, were, in those so *brow-beat*, by the allowed practice of each court, that you might as well have tossed up, on entering the court, for justice (whether in matters of property or life) as leave it to their decision—Thus by degrees the canker ate away the branches of all equity, till, at last, the very root was affected—and finding nobody expected, however they might stand in need of, justice, the great *Hall of Pleas* became useless, and is now, I hear, a riding-house for the officers of the *Middlesex Militia*.

The

The judges having, originally, been all of them practising council themselves, promoted every chicane of law, to bring fees into the pockets of their several friends and relations—Instead of discountenancing all exorbitances of expence, they ever promoted it, till the last stage of a trial—and then, when each client had emptied his purse, they, forsooth, made a merit of making up the affair—not for virtue's sake, but, because they despaired of drawing any more blood from that body.

But in matters of the crown—How did the doctrine of libels thrive, as a poor man bought a nosegay on the 10th of June—Now, you must know, wearing a white rose on that day, of all the year, was sowing, as they said, the seeds of rebellion.

The man was prosecuted—and though an 100 gardeners took their oaths, that all the flowers were pinks; and sure they ought to have known, who had reared such quantities, yet did the great officer of the crown prove them roses, and the man (who wore them) was imprisoned for life.

But of all the stretches in Crown-office power, commend me to those lawyers, who moved for an information against a *poor parrot*, only for saying lawyers were liars—The master, mistress, apprentice and maid,
were

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were all attached to answer certain interrogatories, who taught this bird to say such treasonable words (for it was then no less dangerous to attack or defame a lawyer, than majesty itself—So aggrandized was their power!) when after *three years* severe imprisonment, because they could not answer all their questions, which they said was contempt of court, and that they would not it came out; the parties were innocent, and that the parrot heard a lawyer himself say the words, as he passed to Westminster, and having approved, got them by heart.

The master, by imprisonment, got a confirmed dropsy—the wife hanged herself—one of the apprentices is subject to fits ever since—and the maid has the palsy in both legs.

A family, thus ruined, had no redress—A writ of error, indeed, was offered to the House of Lords—But as that was called, paying *money for moon-shine*, the parties sat down with the loss—and it was no common one; as their business, their health, their friends, and every thing valuable to them, in this life, was truly lost to them.

But I am well informed, that, for certain reasons, best known to themselves, two figures, a *four and a five*, which, when thus separated, were very innocent, immediately became noxious, when joined together.

To

To vex the then ministry, and the several members of the law, their numbers were chalked on every door, and *window-shutter*—and on certain rejoicing nights (rather attended with riot and uproar) it was necessary to have this number on your hat or coat, as a passport thro' the mob.

A poor man, in kindness to a rascal of a justice, as it afterwards appeared, wrote these figures on his back—How severely he paid for his intended service, will but appear by the sequel—for, on a trial, he was sentenced to a full two months imprisonment—when, at the same sessions, a thief was only punished in the confinement of a few weeks.

I have authority from what I thus hear and see, to say with the poet,

“ Hoc fonte derivate clades,
“ In patriam populumque fluit.”

In short, the fixed maxim of the lawyers, was, that any thing they pleased was a libel—nor was it less so, because it was true. So that, in short, the nation was to bear all—pay all—hear all—and yet say nothing at all.

As this was the unhappy situation near a century past, I see no reason why it should be mended now—On the contrary, I believe,

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lieve, if we may judge from appearances of general decay, ruin and devastation, there is no chance of Justice rearing its long drooping head, were their inhabitants to enjoy the fruits of it.

But of this more in my next—am going, after some days of business and confinement, to share a little kind of relaxation at the theatre—yet do I rather envy you the pleasures of social evenings in a fine climate (for this is unwholesome from the decay of so many buildings) for these I never expect in this country—nor shall I find them, till the day that I can personally tell you thus much.

I am,

Yours.

LETTER XVIII.

TH O' I mean to return, occasionally, to my friends, the brother at the Tower and Musæum, yet have I lately entered upon a plan of comparing notes with several—and thus, weighing the opinions of several, finding out truth at last—not

Not that I doubt, even, the smallest particle of intelligence I gained from either the old corporal, or the more antique warder of the Tower; only, as I know brains heated by such resentment, particularly a political one, are apt to shew all facts rather thro' a wrong medium.

I, yesterday, sat myself down at a coffee-house, not far from the place his Majesty's horses are said to be kept.—This place is so resorted to by the Scotch, that I should have feared entering there, had I not, by a family connection, formerly been happy enough to gather the accent—nay, occasionally, even the air of a true North Briton.

This excellence of mine, early cost me dear—for I no sooner sat me down, and asked for the *Edinbro'* papers, but immediately *mine host of the garter* brought me three open books of subscription, which I found immediately required a *proper* signature.

The first was to engage myself to lend money, cloaths, rings, swords, or any ornaments I might possess, to the Scotch corporation for getting English fortunes.

The second was to give credit to the landlord, that he might subscribe my name to any book published by an Hume, a Smollet, a Robertson, or any author of less note, that would prove himself born *Northwards*.

The last was—but, indeed, 'tis so paltry a secret, that it is scarce worth knowing—suppose I was not ashamed to particularize it.

As I was in the scrape, you may depend on it, I followed *Terences's* maxim, of “*Redime te captum quam quæas minimo*. And so, at the expence of a few shillings down, and a *securing* engagement for future assistances (this I laughed at as knowing I should give them the *bag to hold*) I made myself free of the house—and was determined not to be a loser, if possible, by the *sterling* intelligence I should gain under that roof.

I soon found myself among a knot of *Aberdeen* physicians, who I saw gloried in having exterminated the whole race of *English* medicals—And, indeed, they well said, that it was no difficult task, as their education cost nothing, and an Englishman must, at least, have expended a brace of thousands, before he could obtain that, which, says he, we can get for 20 *shillings*—M. D. for that.

I believe this expensive education, in part, brought about that desolation we see every day increasing so fast in the country—we, said he, (taking me for a brother Scot) can live where they will starve, and by inches, too—Our favourite, you know, gives private pensions to all of us—I suppose you
have

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have one—I secured one before I would cross the Tweed—but, if you have not that happiness yet, will inform you that you have nothing to do, but *knock* at a certain door (a whisper, here) and it will be *opened unto you*.

I now imagined, that if I denied any such intentions, he would find out the fraud—as being the only one who did not accept such a favour—the danger, then, of being singular, made me thank him—when he embraced me with the tenderness of a *Russian* bear (so as to prevent me breathing for some minutes) adding, “there are but few *English* left! And we shall drive them all to the devil, or America, soon—no matter which!

Pity my situation, who knew so much of them by reflexion, in America, to be obliged to hear such insolence—Nor will I pester you with particulars which past between us—sufficient is it to add, that he gloried in the name of the whole nation, in saying, that had it not been for an earl of our court, the south of Great Britain would have been eminent as ever.

Our connection, added he; our strict æconomy, joined to that adroitness we take in with our very milk (as we both know) will ever outwit the nation of luxury and diffi-

pation—and this city is a proof of it, now, as I will convince you in the striking of a stop-watch.

On this he pulled out a map of London—and, having turned to those streets which stretch away to Brentford and Uxbridge—said—not one house in all this quarter of the town, is now inhabited by a South-Briton—we have got a proper footing—and may we never lose it!

I listened—answered occasionally—wept at intervals, but pretended a weakness in my eyes—for he would even increase this passion by adding—D—mn them all! We ought to have had possession about a century ago—However! better late than never.

I would fain have gained more intelligence at this place—but a Scotch officer, who knew me in America (and of course not to be from the other side the Tweed) prevented—and lest he should tell the secret, I obeyed his tap at the window, and walked after him—fully mortified to have had the thread of my discourse, so suddenly, intersected—and yet with hopes to take it up again, on some future day, when the cloud of suspicion should blow over.

Before I left the room (I should have mentioned this so curious an anecdote) the landlord asked, if I had the *real history* of Scotland

land at my *fingers ends*. If so, said he, I will (*Ecce Signum*)—then with a *Ha, Ha, Ha*, held up a viol of some yellow liquid—on which (to prove I had no fear of him) I offered him my hand—He excused himself, and I doubt not said to himself—No! let him perform *quarentine* first.

To avoid future embarrassments of subscriptions, rates, contributions and what not ; I asked him, if the small-pox had been much in the neighbourhood ? Never more, answered he, as a proof of it, two of my family are now down with it—On this, I mildly blamed him for not telling me earlier—and so, excusing myself for a month or two, in case I should not see him sooner, I ran across to the Meuse, crying to myself (in the words of Horace)

"Sic me servavit Apollo."

When I was in the Meuse, I said to myself, is there nothing here worth seeing? There used to be horses of Barbary, horses of Holstein, mules of Spain, and asses of Tripoli—Let us see, said I, what we have here now.

I was no sooner happily inclined, than cursedly disappointed. The Meuse (as marked in the map for a place where the royal stud had been) was now a *Foundling Hospital*, and even that not in a very flourishing state,

state, for the treasurer, and other officers of their house, had so far consumed the revenue, that it would scarce admit of more than twenty children *within the year*—add to this, they were very ill taken care of—insomuch, that mothers frequently did for them at once, what this place would have done by *degrees*—namely, put an end to their so miserable being.

But I hope better days will afford better observations; and tho' I might in one letter have comprehended the whole, by saying all was the same, and in a state of general destruction, yet do I, from experience, know, that you love particulars, even trifling as they are—But what Othello applies to jealousy, I will to friendship.

“ ——— Trifles! light as air!

“ Are, to the friendly confirmations strong

“ As proofs of *Holy Writ*.”

Adieu!

LETTER

LETTER XIX.

MY last had as little to say for itself, as the Irishman's estate, which, as he inadvertently but truly said, was *neither here nor there*.—And, yet, scarce is it in the post-house, but, *apothecary like*, I repeat my dose, useless as it may be, tho' ever so disagreeable.

I had now a fancy to see the famous college at Chelsea, intended originally for soldiers—who had, according to the motto at the *south aspect* (*Membris fractorum, &c.*) gained a royal asylum from slavery and danger, not without a proper share of necessity intermixed, in consideration of broken heads, fractured bones, and shattered constitutions.

I went by water to this place, as I imagined the *front* of this so noble fabric, would strike more on my fancy, according to its elevation in the plan, than if I crept in at the back-part, which, as I had imagined, and appeared afterwards, consisted of offices necessary to so large a community.

However this might have been the *original intent*, I found it otherwise on enquiry—for, as at first view, the whole royal inclination was frustrated, by seeing, instead of veteran soldiers, and valiant corporals, its

proper inhabitants, every ward was filled with French servants, Swiss porters; Italian rope-dancers, nor was there a military man hardly to be beheld there, but a few who acted as dependants, and servants, to the rest.

As these foreigners pursued the usual parsimony of their several countries, there was no occasion for offices—every man *cooked his kettle*—and these out-buildings were lett to ale-houses and brothels.

On looking over my old court-kalender, I naturally asked, who had, now, the place of *chief governor*? Was soon informed, it was monsieur de *Ponderage*, once a very eminent *hair-cutter*.

Who is your *lieutenant-governor*, said I? Oh! replies my *nomen-clater* of an old serjeant, who stood porter, he is a famous *Italian singer*—his name, but no matter whether I speak it right or not, is *Senior Caponelli*—Then, looking over my list, was interrupted with a ——— Ah! Sir, throw that *idle book* away—our folks are, now, so ashamed of their crew, that they never allow any list to be made out—an 100 years since it must have been a glorious sight, to have beheld such a parcel of gallant names—gentlemen, who had had those under their command, to honour equally as danger, and who well deserved from Majesty a return,
for

for what they had done to save Majesty itself from ruin and destruction.

What the names of all our present chiefs are, I can't well pretend to say, as I hate the sound of a French word; but this I know, that we are all *Monfies* and *Senioris*—Nay! I am told, so degenerate are our great men in power now, that even cast-off mistresses, because they had danced or sung well at some of our places of pleasure, now inherit in *mens cloaths*, those very benefits the sons of generals, or even generals themselves, ought to have enjoyed.

I asked my friend, here, how soon his duty would be over—when, pointing to the clock, he answered, *in less than you can count the figures on that dial*—on which the bell struck one, and he immediately said—Now! I'm a freeman, and will wait on you wherever your honour pleases.

In your present situation, I replied, perhaps, it might be dangerous for you, among all these foreigners (who, of course, would be glad to have an occasion to discharge you) to be seen talking with a stranger like me? As you say, that a few hours of your leisure are at my service, suppose you step into my boat——never make apologies of dress—a soldier is a soldier, and I honour him in rags—I'm a man of
little

little if any ceremony—and for intelligence, would be side by side with your inferior—My inferior, replied he—then wept—I have none. Can any station be lower, than for a soldier who bore arms near 50 years, and saw more battles fought than ever we won, by-the-bye—to be here a dependant-serving-man, at near 80 or 90 years of age on fiddlers and dancing-masters? Why, Sir, (God bless him, or his good luck) our very chaplain was a music-master too—but I won't say who; they could not clear the milk score, as we say, and so this was a kind of receipt in full—nay, I believe, an absolute one for all that had part.

Look round, Sir, all that wing (near 600 feet in length) has not an Englishman among them—The Scotch, indeed, used to occupy a great part of our building—but now! they have a way of getting the *skilling a day* letter, and so, being tolerably national, they spend it in their own country, grudging even to leave that mere mere trifle in the south of England—by which means, as their interest is so predominant, they drain this part of England of many thousands a year; for, believe me! with them it is but *ask and have*, and many a *bonny loon*, who only rode a few days among the *Cheshires and Gloucesters*, as we properly call the *Troops of Life-guards*,

guards, call themselves experienced and veteran soldiers—So, claim the pension—and away for their own bogs and mountains.

That very fellow you see hobbling before us, broke his leg by scaling a wall to get a young lady of family and fortune for a poor Scotch nobleman—His vigilance was immediately rewarded with a bit of scarlet, and he is entered here as an officer, who had lost a limb in some battle on the Rhine—I once took the liberty (for when we sit on a bench together, rallying is *all fair*) to ask him where the Rhine lay? When he serenely answered, *that it was in Hanover*—and that to keep this great and good family on the throne, of these three kingdoms so justly their due from merits, no less than inheritance, he would willingly have died there for the sake of being buried in any part of that dear dear Electorate—Dear enough, answered your old humble servant, if we were to calculate the millions of blood and treasure it has cost us—But, no matter! And as a comrade of mine said (who had tumbled a little too much, but denied, even at the halberts, having touched a drop of any thing for that day at least) it pleased *God Almighty to strike him so*, or it could never have happened—perhaps, too, we were *struck*—but your boatmen beckon to your honour

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honour—and if you can accept the poor conversation of an invalid, I will summons up all the little knowlege I am master of, and attend you for this day, or any other time of leisure, as your honour shall best approve.

I shewed my approbation by begging him to stop, or, giving him money to victual the boat with any thing he pleased from the *adjacent Tavern*—and, having waited his signal, I embarked with him, in order to find some obscure corner, on the bank of the river, where we might converse unsuspected and unobserved.

What passed, must be the subject of a future letter, am going *down the stream* of the river in particular, as I hope you ever will the *stream of life* in general! with a gentle gale in my favour, and that sun-shine, which I hope ever will smile over the head of him, whose most affectionate is

Your, &c.

LETTER

LETTER XX.

AS we were entering the boat, my guide said, “ Tho’ ’tis no further worth your honour’s while, than just to judge of what has been, by what now is”—I will beg leave to ring at the phyfic-garden gate. But, there is no occasion—the doors are you see all broke to pieces—and we may walk where we will, barring that the weeds there may interrupt us—shall we try?

By all means, said I, that honest fellow there, I do suppose, is the shew-master of the place—let us follow him and his advice, we shall then see all, if any thing, in a regular manner.

But, what would you see? Replied the old fellow, “ *A reed, shaken by the wind!*” I have been gardener here near 30 years, and never myself saw any flower more valuable than a colli-flower, nor any plant more physical than a good radish or cucumber——Lord, Sir, medicinal plants are of no use, since the faculty have been let down so, and which was owing partly to one *Foote*, who exposed what little was left, that they themselves had not exposed—Come, Sir! I know your old guide of the college to be an honest fellow—and if you’ll do me the favour

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to sit under this cedar-tree, I'll tell you, near as I can, what has occasioned this strange revolution.

The scheme in Holland of a guilder only for a physician's fee, will ever keep up the rank of that profession—By the smallness of their fees, you will observe, that every cobbler can afford a physician—who, of course, being at enmity with the apothecary, will not load the patient with nauseous drafts, and of course expensive bills.

But, here! Heaven bless the patient, for, I'm sure, his medicines will never do it—the apothecary appoints the physician—is his commanding officer next to the nurse! who declares both, by virtue of a certain power lodged within herself—and so the man may doubly be stiled a patient—for, besides his bodily illness, he is forced, as the lawyers would call it, *to suffer a recovery*—for he suffers enough before he is half recovered—and all owing to our not following the Dutch method of small fees to physicians, and of course small fees to apothecaries.

A physician in Holland gets, as I have been told, ten times the money they do here—he picks up his guilder at every house—glad are they to see him! Here does he drive, or walk, from one end of the town
to

PRIVATE LETTERS. III

to the other, to glean a single guinea—nor does he deserve even that—The apothecary, with a wig *all bolus*, and with a quene like his own glister-pipe, pretends he knows the family blood best—that a physician who comes, or a stranger, and only looks you in the face, for a minute or two, can never enter into the spirit of your disorder, and so cries, “*practice is the thing* ;” on this he fills the shelf with phials—wastes a quire of paper in wrapping up *powders of post*—and so you become a patient in every sense of the word, enduring, first, his simple conversation ; and secondly, his more simple medicines.

But what think you, Sir, of an old toothless nurse, without being able to write or read, being the *primum mobile* in this affair ? And taking absolute advantage of your weakness of body, and of course mind, to name even physician and apothecary—out of which, like a bawd, she has her 25 per cent. *poundage*—and, like them too, in another sense, will never send for you again, if once you fail to pay that respect she deserves, tho’ she knows she does not deserve it.

This, Sir ! if you will believe me, was the overthrow of physic in this country—our members, finding the trade sinking, thought

thought it in vain to keep up, at a great expence, a cultivation of exotics and physical herbs—and so at once turned the whole into a good kitchen garden—what they don't consume, at their weekly feasts, is sent to a good market, and with the money they buy the best of every thing in season—solacing themselves thus—nay! it is the motto to their new coat of arms.

“ Totus mundus agit histrionem.”

Why, Sir, I have known a consultation of physicians meet here, and the whole time has been spent in settling an horse-race bet, or laying a wager on wind and weather—while the poor patient has been languishing in bed, and foolishly thinking, because they said as much, that the three heads in question were laid together, to consult their welfare—when *all the time* the fees given, and so *ill-spended*, perhaps from a *scanty purse*, were spent in claret and a dish of ortelans.

Can you wonder, Sir, that physic then is in the decline? Nay, that the scheme is even exposed? I would tell you more, but I not only see some of our three knocker tie-wig gentry march this way, but I also see that your boat, unless you get on board soon, will be a-ground—therefore, if you will

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do me the favour, either to stay till these lordly masters of mine are gone, or till you can find a more commodious day, I will do my part.

But, not a word of what is past—for, as I am ill, and often under their hands, I should, perhaps, share the fate which kings too often have—namely, have an ingredient too much—such as is the too common expression, will either kill or cure.

For this day then, farewell! And, pray! as I find the gentleman came all the way from America, to see what we have been, let him not fail to see what we are—if we are any thing.

My next, I hope, will be more satisfactory——interim

Adieu!

LETTER XXI.

TH O' it seemed hardly worth while to enter our boat for such a trifling distance, yet was not sorry, as perhaps, had we gone the road-way, the Moravian college might have escaped us——and the palace of Westminster——both of them, though

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in

in a state of decay, being worthy some attention.

As if we had not sects enough in this metropolis, who should settle among us, at that time, but a set of Moravians—Their chief, with the head of a Cromwel or Machiavel, cast about how he should put 30,000 l. in his pocket, without any hazard to himself.

Accordingly, he landed in this ever-simple and credulous country, with a sample of some few persecuted christians—Their case, as he represented it, was hard, and therefore heard—by the English at least, who love the marvellous to that degree, that, as Shakespear says, they would give more to see a *dead monster* than a *living friend*.

The good *pious parishioner*, whole *duly of man* creatures, immediately entered into a voluntary kind of subscription, to bring over to this land of *freedom* and *toleration*, a multitude of these seemingly persecuted gentry—Their leader prayed—wept—but, privately laughed—and when, from their opinion of his unbounded christianity, they had given him full credit for all they had gathered—he being the properest banker, as he made them believe—away went the Count, treasurer and treasure, both embarked in the same ship; and, in short, all the
poor

poor creditors had to shew for some thousand pounds, was those thousand or so of *old bricks*, and the place may well be called,

“The *Moravian* judgment on the English.”

That other building there, in ruins, was once a palace belonging to the bishops of Winchester for the time being; would you believe, that about a century since, a bishop of that See, had power enough to stop the very Convocation sitting, merely from his own *ipse dixit* to the king—On the accession of the *House of Hanover*, he knew how little the clergy of queen Anne’s reign would be welcome, and so he boldly undertook to prove the blessed sacrament was nothing but a *morning whet*; and that, like the posy of a *burial ring*, the affair was nothing more than,

“When this you see,

“Remember me.”

This surprizing man raised himself from being rector of a small London parish, to be the wealthiest bishop in England, as he did to raise his brother to the primary of Ireland——They were both men of honour, tho’ the preference was ever to him who was bishop of Winchester.

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One anecdote of him will ever bear relating, as it shews how necessary patience is, in exalted stations; and he sets an excellent example, how those who would rise high in church, law or state, should demean themselves in their way to such high honours, as he himself arrived at.

On his being translated from the *See of Bangor*, his first bishopric, to that of *Hereford*, the people of this latter place being Tories (in other words, strong adherents to the family of *Stuart*) could not bear even the name, much less the sight of a man, who had so strenuously opposed the family, and so warmly defended the illustrious succession in the House of Hanover.

On the first notice of his intended arrival, he was met, several miles out of the town, by the inhabitants riding on asses, and sounding every kind of instrument, which led to ridicule and burlesque him.

The louder they roared, the lower he bowed—and being once asked, on another occasion, how he came to rise so high in the church? He answered,

“ By being a willow, and not an oak.”

On his nearer approach to the town, he was then met by the *pevisingers*, who could
not

not mount an horse to meet him without the walls.

Every alms-house, now, disembodied its contents of old women, who joined the chorus of noise and discord—still he bowed, still lower than before.

On entering his palace, he took his last low bow, and walking into his hall, called a favourite servant; and, giving him 20 *guineas*, which he had just counted out, bid him carry it immediately to the people at the gate.

Abraham was, by name, too faithful to dispute any orders of his Right Rev. Father in God, and so set off rather actively than willingly.

On crossing the green, which divided the palace from the front-gate, he met the chaplain, who having just issued from the walls of a college, could not believe Abraham's commission to be in earnest; adding, come back with me, and I'll reason with my lord about it. When he began,

Would I, my lord, bear this indignity at first coming? What usage can you expect to receive hereafter, if thus you give way to their so early insolence?

I'd complain of breach of privilege—would put them in the *spiritual* court—would—would—would—but your lordship

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knows best—though I can hardly hear myself speak for the noise they still make.

So much the better ! said the bishop, give them, for that very reason, the 20 *guineas*—I am sure it is the *city music*.

What a politician ! May you and I equally learn to command our passions—and so

Adieu !

LETTER XXII.

AS we sailed up the river, my guide naturally pointed out to me, right and left, what had any shew of antiquity. He had been near 20 years in the college, and often been employed in shewing foreigners what was curious—By this he had gained such an habit of punctuality, that like the man at Westminster-Abbey—This I have only heard, for my pleasure of seeing is to come ; he thinks even trifles necessary.

He pointed to the house, which a century past was Sir *Hans Sloan's*—adding, some folks of this age is obliged to him for good salaries at the Musæum ; however, the occasion of settling those salaries is long since vanished—for, I am told, there is not a
single

single rarity, first gathered in the house, which is now to be seen—all sunk in the old cause of venison and claret.

That house you see, on the point of land there, all grown over with bushes and briars, is built on the spot where an ingenious son of the bishop I mentioned lived a century past—He wrote, or had the name of writing, a comedy once in vogue, called the *Suspicious Husband*—the revival of a play, at that time, of old Ben Johnson's, being of the same nature discovered, from whence he took his hints—and so, in spite of the then excellent Roscius, the performance lost its value.

The house below it, was then inhabited by the queen of methodists—a countess of this kingdom—the party had no chief but her—whether she was sincere in her profession, the then age best knew—but this I know, that I would not trust even the pope of their sect, with the receiving my poor pension.

Why, Sir, they lay the poor under such contributions, that 'tis impossible either one or other can be honest—the receiver cares not where the money is raised, provided he can pouch it—and so, I think, is accessarily making the poor fellow thief, to give daily bread to his priest.

What think you of a list of 20,000 different poor working people, sequestering a penny a day from their necessary diet and sustenance, merely to support one of their order, who, following the true apostle outwardly, that he may be seen of men, is inwardly a ravening wolf; and having got hold of a back room, in a snug tavern, quaffs his glass—kisses his wench—and then, having paid his reckoning, sallies forth with a bible face, and blesses, almost episcopally, every poor man that passes, to save the expence of pecuniary charity.

This reminds me of a droll dog, who wanting something (under the pain and penalty of an empty belly) more substantial than *a God bless you*—on receiving it from his lips, bid him *take it back again*—but, why so, said the teacher? Because, replied he, if it had been worth a single farthing, you would not have given me so liberally.

You see, Sir, how little I esteem the order—though, a soldier, I have some religion—and have no notion of a man's carving for himself—let him follow the profession he was brought up to—how can we, ignorant and uninstructed, pretend to judge for ourselves, like those who have been set apart for it years and years? I may say
served

served several apprenticeships to it—for in all other trades, we have a proportionate opinion of a workman, by his having served a time to it—nor do we consult a carpenter about shoes, or a shoemaker in matters of boards and nails—yet, forsooth! in religion, a taylor may cut out discourses, like his cloth, to fit any person—and a dull carpenter may hit the nail on the head in divinity, however he misses it in his own business.

'Tis a tedious story! and, no doubt, you have read and heard enough to understand my meaning—for the subject is to me staler than a cheesecake in those gardens there in a wet season—who, when they are made, will sell them—determined to lose nothing in the way of present profit, though the loss in future may be seventy fold.

Where you see those broken piles standing in the river, was once a bridge—'tis now returned to its state of an horse-ferry—this was the second fabric of the kind on the river—now we have a score—it was amazing this great metropolis could so long support itself, with only one passage of this kind over it—namely! the old bridge at London—what barricades must have happened in the hurry of commerce, at those flourishing times—some years they bore it
patiently

patiently—but our nobility, sporting in Surrey, were so vexed, at being delayed in crossing from Lambeth to London, that what they first schemed for their pleasure, only turned at last to public benefit.

As London is now extended, neither that, or the bridge at Black-friars, are passable—houses to the north, here, almost to Uxbridge, have little commerce this way—and, indeed, as the inhabitants are so thinned, every one now getting away to America, 'tis hardly likely we shall repair any one of the bridges across the river—was I young, as your honour, I would go seek my fortune there—Who would be left alone here? This must be the case soon—and am glad to find your visit here is only a visit of curiosity.

My old friend having shewn me the place, at a village called Fulham, where had formerly stood a palace belonging to the bishops of London, said, “Not only the evening is approaching, and the tide near spent, but I must be within the walls of our garrison before sun-set, or perhaps I may be discharged—for do you know, Sir, that the scheme being to drive out all the English, even from this poor pittance of provision, my little post is equally wished for, as if it was a commissionership of the
customs

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customs—men in all stations are equally hungry—and I can guess there is a list of a score footmen, pimps, or French barbers, who would wish to see me expelled when living—did they only wait for my dead shoes, I would forgive them.

We parted in hopes to meet again, I take leave of you in the same manner—and am——

LETTER XXIII.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

AS I had such a full view of the Abbey of Westminster, passing and repassing up and down the river, I was this day in the humour to pay a pilgrimage that way—my map pointed out the path so well, that I wanted no guide to lead me towards it.

As I go to bed with the lamb (according to the old proverb) I rise with the lark of course—and, this morning I rather hurried myself, as I imagined (being, indeed, holiday time) that the place would be much crowded.

On my arrival, I was not a little surprized to find no roof on this august building,
but

but only the side-walls remaining—the first division from the place, where I heard the organ had stood, was filled with stalls of fruit, trinkets, &c. &c.—I believe this is called the body of the church.

Well, said I (bad as this is) the choir no doubt is preserved, as having been the place where so many kings had formerly been crowned when living, and sapoliated when dead.

On my approach to that part, which had the appearance of a choir (here the roof was tolerably entire) I was soon convinced of my error—for this whole area—and not a small one—was now a mahogany warehouse.

On asking, whether any tombs were to be seen, and which was the nearest way to them? They told me, that near 50 years since, every thing of that kind was sold, and that half the chimney-pieces, among the new houses, were fitted up from the marble, porphiry, granite, and *Lapis Lazuli*, which once adorned this noble structure.

As you seem a stranger, said a grave kind of porter, or journeyman, I will quit my business a few minutes, to explain to you what occasioned this—then, calling to a friend of his, he said, “*watch over my affairs while I step out with this gentleman.*”

Would

Would you believe, on his opening the argument, that the same causes, as at St. Paul's, had had the same effects? the pomp, pride and dissipation of the dean and canons, had entirely overthrown the place.

As their palates went beyond their income, they first began by lessening the number of singing boys and men, the better to aid and assist their income—Now! as music, vocal and instrumental, was the sole motive at that time of day—I mean a century back—of any ones going to church, the place immediately began to be deserted—at last it became entirely so—there was better singing at a neighbouring chapel, where the mad dean, as I before-mentioned—presided over his inferior clergy, and so at length we became the odd place you see.

But they had some little glimmering of religion left after that—for while there were any tombs left, country people would flock here—and, as they entered a place of worship—often in droves too, at holiday times, the bye-standers imagined, and with “*likelihood enough to lead it,*” according to Hamlet—that it was a *call to Christendom*—no harm, Sir, even in appearances—but the new-buildings, northward, taking away all our valuable stone-work, nothing was to be found worth seeing, and so we were, and
are,

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are, deserted by those kind of animals, in order to make way for the animals you see here.—*Fat bulls of Basan*—and, indeed, *all the beasts of the forest are ours—and so are the cattle from a thousand hills.*

At this corner—as I have been often told—was a beautiful monument, to the memory of one secretary Craigs—some lines of one Pope (a poet at Twitnam) were, if true, much to his honour—for, he says (which would be a miracle now-a-days) that *tho' a statesman he was a friend to truth*—That he *never broke a promise, or served a private end*—That he *never gained a pension—and never lost a friend.*

I neither can, or wish, to contradict this—I would fain make myself believe, there was such a man once in the country (for the honour of that country, if any thing can save it from contempt) tho' there never may be another—but let us leave him to be read of in Pope's works, of which we have a single volume preserved here in our nominal library—In America, I hear he is read and admired—*every dog has his day*—and perhaps it happens from the old proverb, that *no man is a prophet in his own country.*

In that very corner, as I have heard (where you see sausages leaping in the pan, and
crossing

crossing each other at *right angles*, was a tomb of the great Sir *Isaac Newton*—If his works had not made him immortal, am sure his tomb never would—for I remember part of it making the ornaments to pillasters on a city alderman's green-house—the fine medallion of him crowns the top of a *beaufet* in a common-councilman's dining-room—and the fellow I hear has the meanness to let it be seen, for buying six pennyworth of any thing in his shop.

There was another of a famous general, called Stanhope, not far from this—I hear it may be found almost entire at a bun-house, near Brentford, and is placed over the oven, to make it correspond with the title of the *Royal Oven*—any thing fine and uncommon gaining that title, and keeping the place in countenance—tho' perhaps only one of the King's grooms, or even *stable boys*, laid out a penny there several years ago.

But I see you relish the subject, said my honest index post—so only be here to-morrow, and I'll turn over a new leaf—will keep nothing from you my poor *knowledge-box* is master of—only remember that *tace* is Latin for a whisper, and that all I say—can—will—or shall say—nay even have said—must be secret as a quack doctor's back-door

door—or the back stairs of a prime minister's closet.

On this prospect of a better day, tomorrow I lay aside my pen, and am

Yours, &c.

LETTER XXIV.

I HAD proposed, my dear friend, returning to my station at the Abbey, according to a kind of promise I made to myself, no less than to my guide—but, meeting with a clergyman of our acquaintance, who was in England on the same errand as your humble servant, I joined him, and taking the chance of his intended day's tour, found he was steering to see that palace of lunatics the court of Bedlam.

With all my heart, said I—so, engaging a boat from a place, called in my map Whitehall, we reconnoitered, for a few minutes, the ruins of a famous room, called, about a century ago, the Banqueting House.

The remains of beauty and order appeared on the side-walls, which was all that was visible—the famous cieling (and for which relict I called here, was sold years
and

and years ago, to finish and adorn a great assembly room of some inland town, whose name escapes my memory.

It was painted so, says my *Vade Mecum*, by one *Peter Paul Reubens*, who was here in a public character, and made a knight on the occasion—in so short a stay, as a year only, 'tis amazing he could execute such a quantity and variety of subjects—but the bold strokes of a great master cover, in a moment, what a minor artist could not execute in a month.

I could learn nothing even of the ruins of that noble house, or palace, which *Wolsey* built, and which gave the name to this whole spot—the best house remaining was that of a Scotch earl, whose name and title were unknown in London till the favourite appeared, who fetched many of their country southward, and, as is the saying, *out of darkness called into light*.

The little house of *Sir John Vanbraugh*, so ridiculed by *Dean Swift*, and in so many parts of his works, was now only a sutling-house for that party of the guards who do duty here, ever since the house of this northern earl was attacked, near a century since—so happy are and have been the ministry, ever to find an excuse to keep up a standing army.

Thus, many years ago, half a dozen regiments extraordinary were always maintained to guard the coasts of Kent, Sussex and Hampshire, against the destructive trade of smuggling—By the printed papers of those days—as no doubt would be the case now—the surest way to prevent this cursed practice, would be to lower the duties, when the trade would not be worth continuing—All this you can better inform me and yourself of, than my pen can undertake to declare; so our boatman calling to us, lest we should lose both time and tide (which you know stay for no man) we set off for the nearest stairs leading to Bedlam, which was a place called Queen Hythe.

Little worth observation appeared on our way to this palace of lunatics—the Guildhall of the city was shewn to us, only as a place where formerly much eating and drinking had been carried on—I simply imagined the floor had formerly been paved with granite or porphyry—but! here I must beg pardon, for telling a truth rather indecent—the frequent discharges of claret, from the aldermen and common-council formerly, had so tinged the pavement, that even a statuary might have been deceived.

The courts of justice had formerly been held here—but juries having been brow-beat

beat so often, by the very judge who ought to have animated and encouraged them, that at length the city, deserted as it was, could hardly make up a dozen men who had their senses, or were sober, to try any cause, on which the seat of justice was removed to the county town of Brentford—and is to be found there, in a small room over the market-house, to this day.

On our arrival in Moorfields, 'twas natural for me to ask (on not seeing them) what was become of the two famous statues, made near a century and half since, by one Cibber, a most eminent sculptor, as was his son the most eminent comedian of the age—The old trick had been played here, as in most other places—namely, that to have a splendid dinner these glorious statues were exchanged, with the city cook, for so many haunches of venison—and he placed them over his cow-house at Peckham Rye—where, having remained long enough to be laughed at for laying out his money in what was not useful, his wife ordered them to be sawn asunder, to furnish hewn stone for her pantry, in which structure she was more expensive, than any court lady in her dressing-room.

On entering this building, a venerable looking man addressed himself to us, and

offered his service, as one so well acquainted with every part and department of the house, by having latterly been a member of it.

His obliging carriage won so on us both, tho' rather more on my clerical friend, that we immediately closed with his offer, suspecting nothing but a gain of knowledge and information at the easiest rate.

As we past along, he would point out particular objects not worthy of attention—by saying, that mad fellow deserves the disorder he is punished with—he was fool enough to sell an estate in America, some 20 or 30 years since, when he had not brains to suspect the contrary—and this for a trifle, in order to purchase a troop of horse in Great Britain—the regiment, by some shameful behaviour, was broke, so that he had not even half-pay, God help him——and his estate in America is now worth (since some late alterations there) at least 5 or 6000 a year.

Observe that man in the tie wig and morning gown—he bears, you see, a *white wand* in his right hand—every body, besides himself, believes him a conjurer—and his room, like the starved apothecary in Romeo and Juliet, has an *alligator stuffed*, as a symbol of his *nick-nack* or *long-brain*. His
scheme

scheme is to blow up the world, and render it such as it was before the flood—like a true Roman, he does it all for the good of his country—and he will ask you very gravely, if you want a river or mountain on your estate—that he is obliged to produce a river for a friend of his, very near where your ground lies, and so the difference of trouble will be little in watering your meadows, so as to produce five load of good hay on an acre.

Why he made a poor innocent gentleman here as mad as himself, by only giving him hopes, that he should have plenty of water on an hilly estate of his in Hampshire—On this he built a most magnificent house—married a lady without a farthing of money—sent for fossils, shells and minerals, from afar, to make his grottoes—and when all came to all, the poor man, finding that a madman had been his conductor, he ran mad himself, and is now close confined in our third story here.

Near a score of those characters you see sitting in the garden there, and enjoying the sun, are mad, by having over-built themselves in the environs of Marybone, Tyburn, and so on to Uxbridge—some of them have the disorderly inheritance—for their ancestors began what they continued—

namely! the trade of converting good kitchen-ground into streets——these never were inhabited—one floor mortgaged the other—at length the ground-landlord seized on the estate, and the builder died in this very house perhaps.

But above half our community consist of those, whose fathers, having embarked their fortunes in American affairs, never got remittances—the country there flourished—England sunk—they wanted no commodities from their native country—made all their own manufactures—the merchants here embarked in a shewy and expensive way of life, did not care to lay down equipage or table—so, in short, ran mad—as did your humble servant, almost on a similar occasion.

But 'tis amazing, said I, if you are recovered so well, and are radically cured, why you chuse to remain here? Liberty is sweet—and I should think a foot of free land, to stand on; out-weighs all we have walked over to-day.

Lord, Sir, replied our leader—the people out of doors are equally mad as we—here I have no rent to pay—no table to keep—no cloaths to buy—I have, moreover, some agreeable connections here—and, believe me, I dread the day when they shall give
me

me my liberty—I, even (tho' among friends, I'm well as yourselves) sham Abraham as we call it—and play a thousand eccentric gambols still to be entitled to this glorious protection.

And now, gentlemen—as no doubt you are a little weary with your ambulating curiosity, what think you of seeing my little hovel? I look on it daily, as a sailor safe on shore regards the wreck on which he saved his life—That which was, alas, the seat of my unhappiness, is now the seat of my content—I pray you walk in.

The summons seemed too agreeable to be refused, and with little ceremony we entered—at once pretending kindness, tenderness, and that the air of the door might perhaps be dangerous to our necks, besides that the noise would incommode us, he at once not only bolted the master door, but even the little wicket, thro' which, if left open, we might have gained assistance, by calling aloud for that help, we too soon wanted—tho' we were two, yet the strength of madmen being more than double that of other men, part began to tremble, in proportion as his eyes began to fascinate us individually.

His first address was to my clerical companion—Well, Sir, said he, you are a stew-

ard of holy mysteries—that is your trade—for indeed of late it is such—thanks to our reverend prelates here, who never give away any kind of preferment, honorary or dignitary, till they weigh it well first, and see if it will produce them *75 per cent.* or no—However! I don't blame them so much in the main—consider what their education cost—consider, that for 20 years of their lives, perhaps, not a butcher would give them credit for a pound of chops, though his reverence might quote an hundred texts of scripture, in favour of the church in general, and himself in particular.

After a *seven years famine* like this, don't imagine his divine spirit could so easily forget all he suffered—so, being arrived at a point of independency, he plays off the *lex talionis* on them—and the butcher and baker in vain solicit a living for their son the servitor (determined to have one gentleman in their family, though a poor one) till they pay pretty handsomely for it in money or *money's worth*—*par pari*—you know the rest—*dabimus petimusque*—But why should I spout Latin to you, unless it was to shew I had near been a parson myself, and was educated accordingly, in order to learn the art of being an early bishop.

Talking

Talking of a bishop—well thought of—How do you like, said he to my reverend friend, that Reubens of mine over the chimney—a little temporizing, when in a state of captivity, seemed now highly necessary—On which he answered—oh! 'tis an original, I'm sure—You lie, there is no such thing—but this is the way to be a bishop, and soon—I forgive you—Well! and what think you of that landscape over the door—I will try, said my friend in a whisper to me, how truth will please him—so I answered, *that I saw no such thing*—On this he fetched a stick from under the bed, and having given me three or four good thwacks on the shoulder, I said it was an excellent performance.

The stick being now in his hand, he looked at me hard, and said, if you would learn to be a bishop, you must learn to jump—come then! tho' you are as little made for it as myself, yet will I teach you to be a bishop, so hitting my shins several knocks, to provoke an higher leap, he at last turned to me—and said—come, Sir—kneel down, and say after me.

Had my knees been stiff as a camel's, you may easily imagine I was quickly bent; and so, without a cushion, he made me repeat,

peat, on my bare knees, words to this effect.

I do believe the ruin of this once glorious country, was the repealing, above a century since, an act of parliament, called the *Stamp-Act*. That what the rankness and eagerness of one m——r did, the popularity of another chose to undo—nor do I solemnly (here, by-the-bye, I had a knock of the pate, for not speaking that last word emphatically, and with the quaver of a F——ce, or any other Presbyterian hypocrite) think, that either one or other of those two patriotic brothers-in-law, ever thought so much of their country as themselves.

I do also most solemnly swear and vow, that when I return to my own native country of America, I will never wear a shoe, hat, stocking, boot, wig, shirt or handkerchief, which is the manufacture of this paltry kingdom, even tho' the produce of our own is not of half the goodness—and I do most solemnly swear, that England may thank herself for all she now suffers, and has for near a century past, by desertion of its inhabitants, migration of its richest merchants, and transportation of all its favourite manufactures.

I do

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I do also most potently and powerfully believe, that all the good people of this country, are now settled somewhere in America, and that only the scum and refuse of arts, of every kind of science, are left behind.

Sir, replied my mad director, you must seal this with your blood—you have a ruddy complexion, and I shall be sure of its excellence.

Think of my situation! but the “*sci me servavit Apollo*” was my friend—for the keeper passing by, and finding the wicket shut—immediately unlocked it—not a little surprized parson Adams and myself, under the care of a man, whom he declared, at certain times, the maddest of all his pupils.

However, determined to have the last word, he said thro’ the wicket (after the door was fairly shut after us) go tell my American subjects, I will be among them in less than a month—I am *Harry the Ninth*—I came on purpose to settle some treaties of offensive and defensive alliance with my brother of England—and, contrary to all faith of monarchs, I am here called a Madman—and am shut up like a turkey in a coop—but I here declare war—am like the Medes and Persians—never shall vary—I
will

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will never make peace, but, like my brother of Spain, die sword in hand against his enemies the Moors.

Our distance, as we were walking off, prevented hearing more—I fear you have heard or read too much. Therefore will release you after a *double dose* of, I fear, disagreeable medicine to you.

Adieu!

LETTER XXV.

YOU may imagine, my good friend, that we were as glad to smell the air of even Moorfields, as Ænëas was, after the frights and fears he met with in the infernal shades—I scarce thought myself safe, when I was in a bookseller's shop there, cheapening old authors—every thing, and every figure, human or otherwise, had the air of madness—and a wild ox, who had reason enough to be so, from a not *very gentle* pat on the head some butcher had given him—made me still think, even animals imbibed this disorder, by breathing the very atmosphere around this palace of lunatics.

My

My friend, the right reverend (I wish, for your sake, he ~~was~~ a *Right Reverend Father in God*—tho' not in America, by-the-bye) began to ruminate on what had dropt from his Majesty of America—and said, as does the Polonius in Hamlet, of his prince; tho' this be madness, yet is there reason in it.

As we even walked under the wall, we still heard his most sacred mock-majesty calling out for his body guards—bidding them fire upon the populace, however innocent they might be—where is my secretary at war? Have I no secretaries of state? I'll hang all my reverend and learned judges, if they don't hang any one I dislike—In short, if Old England don't behave better, I'll command my subjects, of New England, to make war upon them—and then, like poor feeble Lear, concluded by swearing, “*he would do something should be the very terror of the world*—which, perhaps, ended in what generally happens, after a dinner of too many vegetables, to an aged appetite—which the almanac expresses, in his winter months, very accurately—by *flying winds with some rain*.”

I have since heard, he is compiling a treatise, which he gives a title to, of one in Oliver's days—namely, *Killing no murder*, declares, he will have a free parliament (as
is

is that of Old England—Heaven bless the day!) tho' it costs him half he is worth—and swears not a placeman, pensioner, officer, naval or landed, nor any civil officer, shall sit in his House; adding, this is talking to an echo, with such a parliament, as you are sure of their answer.

I own, could I be sure of seeing him at the window, on the *terra firma* of the gravel walk, under it I could stay whole days, to hear his system of politics—but, like a parrot, he won't talk when you would have him most do it—and so, as my time in this country, like the days of this month, grows shorter and shorter, I must avail myself of every minute, and forfeit much knowledge perhaps in pursuit of more.

But one thing I admired in his cell, however my fears would not permit me to examine it, and which I beg, if ever I get a copy of, you will place at the head of this collection of letters, if you preserve them (which am conscious they don't deserve) and that was a map of this country, where every city, town and village, almost, had a kind of *fuimus* on it.

Thus, in that called Somersetshire, the capital of Bristol was thus marked—Here stood the city of Bristol—In Cheshire was to be read, the small remains of an ancient
Palatine

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Palatine city, called by the name of the country—As you surveyed Staffordshire, I observed—here once flourished the town of Birmingham—And in the county of Surry, “Here is what was of the county town of Guildford—famous about a century since, for the residence of a man, whose dirty, scraping disposition, gave him the name of counsellor Scavenger—He was such a compleat judge of numbers and chances, that he would lay any man ten to one, and win it, that No. 45, would lose against any one prior or subsequent to it”—and we are left to guess pretty nearly who this man was, by a kind of epigrammatical acrostic, which was made a kind of note of, at the foot of the said map—and which my friend the parson copied in short hand at the cell, before his most sacred majesty began to play the part of a king.—The lines are these—and I doubt not, but, in your collection of odes, epigrams, acrostics, &c. of which I know you to be so exact in collecting, this may be among them—least it should not, from a pencil copy half obliterated, I send it you.

“ Foul

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- “ Foul hands—foul heart—foul tongue—*foul Fiend*
all o’er,
“ Loud—lying—lazy—but in quest of ore ;
“ Engag’d the bully of each dirtiest cause,
“ The prostitute of quirk—and tortur’d laws ;
“ Child of the earth—each parent, still, unknown,
“ He proves his scoundrel blood to be his own ;
“ England has seen one Jeffries—and they may,
“ Review a second—on some future day.
- “ No need of *Wit’s Acrostic* to invent,
“ Of whom I mean this picture to present ;
“ Read but his list of vices—and you’ll view,
“ To whom, alone, this character is due ;
“ Ordure itself, the self-same title wears,
“ No Honour then in that word S I R appears.”

The last secret, according to the Christmas expression, is an impenetrable one, unless the person an 100 since, was made a baronet of—He was, by all accounts, *too knowing* a man to be a *simple knight*—but you will find out the intended humour, perhaps, if you read the trials of some *Rioters*, about a century back—and which I saw in your study once, bound up with a pamphlet, called, *the Norfolk attorney raised*—or the history of *Jack turned gentleman*.

I drew a sketch (herewith sent) of this building, in order to compare it with your drawing of the *Thuilleries* at Paris—and
which

which I shall have the pleasure of doing soon with you in person.

From hence I went to see, if any part of London-wall was to be found—the love I bear to Bobadil's character, tho' so mistaken by the very actor, who first appeared in it (for he is a *Thraso* all over—a *Noll-Bluff*—and not a *Shivering Harlequin*) made me think of this—and while I was (which is often the case) looking for one thing, I found another—for the old mayoralty-house in Finsbury (from whence the mayor of London takes the *Title of Lord*—and the Lord knows how otherwise he got it—else, why does he not sit in the house of those magnificent gentry?) was still in being—and as a proof that a citizen of London, or of any city in the world, will ever be a citizen, there is, over the chimney of the eating-parlour, a painting of some quondam lord mayor, who is choaked, at his own table, devouring a turkey—Death is striking at him, in the middle of his banquet, with an unerring dart—but my lady mayoress seems to think it an hard case, that he should not finish his supper—and so is reasoning with his mightiness in the citizen stile—Do, my dear, dear Death, let him eat a bit of the liver (you see what a fine one it is)—and then let him die and be d——nd;

as it will not then be in the power of any gazetteer wit to say otherwise, than that he died after eating an *heartly supper*—the idea of starving (in other words, *living temperate*) being the greatest of all blots in a *city escutcheon*--beyond that of your grandmother being caught with *long John* the footman, in her grand climacteric—on her great, great grand-daughter having twins by a chimney-sweeper.

A tapestry manufacture, of some consequence, was carried on at this place—and the master of it had resolution enough to laugh at the picture, in question, though a common-councilman of Billingsgate ward.

We now steered towards Gresham college—and were not much alarmed at seeing it in ruins—as the professors had never done any thing, a century since, to give it the name of a college, 'twas of little consequence, whether they could write or read now—which I found too exactly the case.

One anecdote is on record of this, so famous university, that a gentleman, failing of his professorship in music, his friends bid him go back, for there was a vacancy in astronomy—and that nobody had such sight as himself.

The man tried—got the chair—held it for above 40 years—and, barring that he
was

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was a star-gazer, *ab origine*, did not know a constellation from a constable.

Adieu !

LETTER XXVI.

AS I had strided to the city, I tarried some days with our friend in the Minories, determined not only to settle our mutual accounts with him, but to take my leave of all antiquity in this part of the world—if any still remained worthy of the least annotation.

My old friend at the Tower (for I enquired, being in the neighbourhood) was turned out of his place the morning after I saw him last—the governor of the place happened to be a Scotsman—and some of that famous regiment (perhaps infamous) over-hearing our discourse, relative to a certain favourite of that nation—he, next morning, was bid to *gang hame*—and I could learn no further account of him more, than that they thought he was little less than a traitor, for daring to think, much more speak, ill of any one, from the other side the Tweed.

L 2

I had

I had so exquisite a drawing of a church, in Walbrook, dedicated to St. Stephen, that I was determined to visit it—being on a Wednesday—I naturally thought the doors would be open—and that I should meet with no delay in sending for the clerk or sexton—who, like the parson, were not to be found but in office-hours.

On approaching the street, I naturally asked what time prayers would begin? The person I made this request to, happening to be a kind of Presbyterian, it occasioned an hearty laugh—allowing some reasonable time for this to subside, I at last received for answer—Why, Sir, the church has not had a prayer in it for near an 100 years—thanks to the pride and avarice of the then clergy, it fell with the religion of this country in general—the superior loved ease too well ever to do any duty himself—and leaving it to hackney and itinerant priests, one neglected going—then another—whole families deserted at last—when it was let, rather than have it kept useless, as a pantry or store-room, to the lord mayor's great and gormondizing house here adjoining to it—and has remained so—I may say usefully so, ever since.

But Sir (added he) if you have a desire of seeing what was (as I have heard) esteemed
so

so capital a building, follow me, and I'll engage you shall not only satisfy your eyes, but your belly also—for no man has a better store-room than his lordship.

You must know he is of a noble family, which, among us plain citizens, is a great matter—On doing some paltry work for the great folks near Westminster, they made him a privy-counsellor—Not that I imagine they ever trusted him with a secret worth a single cork to one of his own bottles (he was, and is still, a wine-merchant) but the fool wanted *a feather in his cap*, and having invented many dangers never intended against him, he got himself this honour, in fact, as a security to his person—for you have heard, Sir, no doubt, that it is absolutely loss of right hand, to strike a privy-counsellor.

Now, Sir, to shew the falsibility of human nature, and that nothing is in a state of perfection we do—and that besides every law, the most rigid and exact, has its loop-hole to creep out at; a droll dog, to whom he had not only sold a bad commodity to, but even short measure, took occasion, when his fur robes were off, and he was easier come at, to kick his breach round his own hall, in the midst of all his court friends, and noble relations.

You may imagine the severest prosecutions were begun, but the gentleman had luckily secured Sir Buliface on his side—who, having been a privy-counsellor himself—and served in the same method, better knew how to get his client out of the scrape, having fatally found the same in point against himself, when his old antagonist, the serjeant, insisted on it, that the letter of the law expressly limited the damages, to loss of hand for striking, and not *loss of leg* for kicking—and so they were both kickt accordingly.

But a more droll anecdote is told of this venerable officer of justice—who piques himself on doing every thing to serve the crown, as it is called—when, all the while, as the crook-backt king says, “*To serve yourself good Norfolk.*”

Some comical dogs—every country has these in proportion—tho’ not in such abundance as this country—I have travelled, Sir, in the way of my business—and attribute the reason of this, to the fears they have abroad—first, of the church—next, of the state—and lastly, of offending their superiors of every estate—by which means many a piece of wit and humour is abortive; which, in this country, would come to perfection.

But,

But to the point—knowing his lordship's turn for a whisper in politics, and how dearly he relished being first, in the unravelling any plot, or appearance of a plot, against the government, a young fellow wrote to him, that, sleeping with a girl of the town, he learned by her, that she lately came from Paris—and was mistress of many secrets, which, at fond hours, the English gentlemen there had instructed her with, of a dangerous plot, meditating against the government here, not excepting even majesty itself.

That knowing his lordship's great sagacity and penetration, he thought this whole affair might be brought to light—for at intervals of rest, on her side, and of the want of it on his, he perceived this fair one was marked on a certain spot (which she inherited from her first ancestor) with several moles—tho' scarce discernable by the naked eye.

That he believed, if by concurrence of his brother magistrates, he would make a general search, this person might be found out, and the whole plot discovered.

The anonymous writer, as he desired, was thank'd in the public papers—and a copy being preserved—and which he had about

him (it being then so recent an affair) I send it you as follows.

“ The lord mayor of London returns
 “ his best thanks to an unknown correspon-
 “ dent, for the so very particular attention
 “ he has shewn to his own safety in parti-
 “ cular, and to the community in general
 “ —takes this public method of letting him
 “ know the letter came safe, under the seal,
 “ and in the cypher he described, in a pre-
 “ vious letter to it.

“ Shall not lose a moment in endeavour-
 “ ing *to get to the bottom of so dark a*
 “ *thing*, if he is able—and to discover eve-
 “ ry the minutest particular, so well under-
 “ stood between them.

“ That his kind correspondent may, if
 “ he will, be still a friend to him, and
 “ good government (ever inseparable) by
 “ giving him further hints, as they shall
 “ offer in the same cypher, and under the
 “ same signature.”

By order, &c.

Hodge-Pot, Town-clerk.

That very evening, it being dry and dark (which generally replenishes the flesh-markets——moonshine ever being a sworn enemy

enemy to wh——s and pick-pockets) above 1800 well-drest girls (no others being suspected to have been the companions of this unknown and gentleman-like correspondent of his lordship's) were secured in different round-houses—all with a view of being examined before they were discharged.

One of the chief magistrates, who had ever been reputed blind, now proved it all a farce—for, when his lady offered to examine *into* the premises, as being a better judge (with her eyes at least) he refused it—the reason, no doubt, was a pleasure he expected in the scrutiny—however, he artfully gave out, that it was a *political* affair—and women could not be trusted to look into such *deep* matters.

Out of the 1800 unfortunate ones, above five parts in six were absolutely discharged by all the justices in quorum; for having no mark but the *common one* peculiar to the sex in general—near an hundred were reserved for *further examination*, as the candles grew dim, and their worship's sleepy and fatigued with the inquisition. But near 50 were sent in coaches, under a *strong guard* of the *Coldstream regiment* (with strict orders to fire, if they even laughed, much less spoke) to the *Cock-pit*, where the lords of the council had been impatiently waiting, to search
into

into this dark deep affair—particularly his Grace of ———, who had provided a pair of barnacles (No. 45.) the better to gain an *insight* into this *horrid* and *black* matter.

As many of these ladies, by the hasty and indiscriminate search, were people of reputation (an affair his lordship, and his brethren of the bench, are to answer for next term) you may imagine, what pleadings, nay even struggles were used by them, to spare so public an examination—but tears, much less words, were all in vain—*search* was the word—and *I'll warrant* it was its associate.

Three or four of the company had particular reasons, why, at that time of all others, they begged to be examined by matrons of their own sex—'twas all in vain! the great round table (once the seat of ——— was, now—but guessing here may better please the gentle reader than expressing—and so I leave him to imagine the rest——when a second letter arrived, contradicting every thing this anonymons correspondent had so seriously advanced—on which the council broke up—and the Gazette never mentioned a word of the matter.

But you are left to imagine what a P. S. the disaffected *London-Evening* had on the occasion

occasion—he swore to it, that our privy-counsellors, instead of doing business, were always *playing at bo-peep*—that all the old ones (more particularly his Grace of ——) had got the names of *peeping Tom*—and that he believes many a countess, if not the—— herself proved with child that night, merely from the account of what past in the privy council.

But who, Sir, believes or minds such a silly fellow? Who cares not how he fills his columns, so he can but fill his own belly—and now, Sir, I see the butler eating! we will follow him, and take the advantage of so favourable an opportunity—least another should not offer again in a hurry.

On entering the vestibula of this elegant building, I drew out my plan—but leave you to judge how I was deceived, when the dome so beautifully contrived, by the great Sir Christopher Wren, was hung round with ropes of onions—bags of morells and truffles—and every now and then a Westphalia ham appearing among them, by way of letting the spectator know, that man was not fed with ham alone, no more than with bread—tho’ there was *cut and come again*.

The pulpit remained tolerably entire, and on narrow inspection was filled, together with the reading and clerk’s desk, above half way

way to the top (a vacancy having been made by means of a late feast) with little vials of bitters, to create an appetite—while, what few of the pews remained, were brim-full of dry'd tongues, Bologna sausages, dates, figs, almonds, &c. &c. as a desert after each feast, of which they had had 18 (suppers included) but the last week.

The capitals of each beautiful pillar and pillaster of this building were entirely obscured by chains of black puddings and sausages—nor could the smallest part or parcel of any frieze, cornice or stucco-work, be seen by means of the intervening *Hog's-Cheeks*, and Yorkshire hams—all I said (when I beheld this profusion of *eatable architecture*, was in the words of Shakespear (as a title to one of his comedies) *as you like it*.

From what I saw in this adjoining store-room, I had little inclination to see the mansion-house—I could easily comprehend what were the ornaments there—as through the windows of their famous Egyptian hall, I could discern a *bas-relief* (almost equal to an *Alto*) consisting of manjoes, angelica roots, mushrooms, dried pears, and peaches—with an *et cetera* of confectionary, longer than a courtezan's with her milliner, or a fop's

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fop's with his taylor—and, perhaps, of as *long outstanding*.

My friend being called home, obliged me to give up all further views of intelligence here, and so I went home to finish this to you, least I should fail of so good an opportunity, as that of captain Williams's departure to-morrow—So, believe me! now, as ever,

Your very, &c.

LETTER XXVII.

WESTM. ABBEY, Continued.

I HAD but little trouble to-day, in finding my old friend of the tombs, tho' I did not find him at leisure—However! a promise of paying him for a day's work, and a little compliment to his master, explaining his use to me, and my short stay in the island, easily procured me the assistance I wanted.

The famous school, founded by queen Elizabeth, and whose scholars were then called Queen's scholars, as ever since, till lately, they were stiled the King's, was no longer

longer a seminary for learning—on the contrary, I found that a master builder possessed it, and that the quondam school, and dormitory, were now filled with deal-boards, bricks, and implements for edification, of a different nature, from what it had been formerly.

I was very solicitous to see all those monuments, which, in former ages, the parliament had voted, as a reward for brave officers, both by sea and land—but was answered, as they were all jobs of occasional fits of favour, so they vanished with the breath of vulgar fame, and perhaps are now to be seen, in detached pieces, up and down the taverns, and public-houses, of Westminster.

The lovely monument of Shakespear I found, on enquiry, had been sold to be placed in a pamphlet-shop, near one of the theatres, where the players used to frequent—and had, indeed, subscribed in part to procure it—Dryden's bust was at a music-shop, merely on account of his having wrote an ode or two, in praise of harmony—and, indeed, the man owned it was a piece of œconomy—for otherwise he must have had the busts of some Italian singer, as was the mode of all music-shops, and which

which would have cost him more than any of their heads were worth, even in plaister.

Poor Gay's head had been many years fixed in a grammar-school, as a patron to fables, which boys ought to read daily—and old Shovel made a very good sign to a wig-maker, in some adjacent street, where it was intended as a burlesque on that kind of commodity, every one then, as now, chusing to wear their own hair—or wigs so nearly imitating it, that they appeared one and the same.

As religion declined in this country, and as the dean, prebends, and other officers of the church, grew dissipated, and of course avaritious, liberty was given, on paying a certain sum of money to them, to have what kind of monuments they pleased—thus generals, who never were caught in the fact of any one virtue, when living, had emblems of every virtue under heaven, the moment they were buried.

Governors of forts abroad, and colonels of regiments at home, who had robbed the private men of what the public had allotted them for cloaths, pay, food, arms (with an *et cetera* longer than their own spontoon, while they lived to brandish it—had the assurance (at least they desired, by will, it should be so—or their executors did it of
their

their own hands) to have the figures of Patience, of Charity, of Meekness—nay, even of Faith—not one of which they were acquainted with, while they larded it here—but it was of service, I hear, to somebody—for the figures, being well sculptored, sold well—and many of them are still to be seen at houses of pleasure and entertainment near this metropolis.

I found my curiosity soon satisfied here—little remained visible that led to any discovery, but of their vices, whose monuments they were—nor can I forget a smart distick on one of them, which represented a *famous* (rather *infamous*) general officer, and governor, in a state of resurrection—The lines were,

“ Lie still if you’re wise,

“ You’ll be damn’d if you rise.

No place, once so eminent for giving pleasure to the beholders, did, on the whole, give less—before I left it was determined to see the Jerusalem chamber, where so many crowned heads had lain in state—and, having begged my guide to lead the way, he said—oh! *well thought of*—there is a lord mayor of London now in that situation—the doors will not be opened for an *hour or two*—but I can lead you in at a private entry,

try, where, by-the-bye, you will see *all for nothing*, as is the common saying.

These citizens (replied the man) are fond of revelling, when alive, and being among the nobility, when dead—you shall see the idle ceremony in an instant.

On this we entered thro' an apartment, which once had been the dinner-room for the king's scholars—and, on passing to the inner chamber, the mutes, who, an hour or two hence, were to act the part of crying and wailing over the *dead corpse*, were regaling themselves with beer, and bread, and cheese, wishing an hundred lord mayor's dead, after this manner, that they might better get their living.

This man had been a *gross feeder* (as most of them are) and more particularly fond of swine's flesh—which gave occasion to a jocosé to say, when he saw all this pomp and parade about him, that he had *brought his hogs to a fine market*.

I, with difficulty, could make out the inscription, on a flat stone, which was erected to the memory of that almost divine composer, *Henry Purcell*—the conclusion of which gave handle to a droll wag to parody it, on a famous vender and maker of fireworks—the former has in its conclusion, that, “he is gone now to that place where

M

only

only his own harmony can be exceeded—when this wit says of the latter—He is also gone to that place where only his own *fire-works* can be exceeded.

As it happened to be the time when the royal vault in Henry the VIIth's chapel was opened, in order to repair it perhaps (observe this end of the once famous cathedral, is tolerably entire) I could not avoid stepping that way, in order better to satisfy my curiosity.

Imagine me not a little shocked, when I heard the workmen removing royal relicks, with equal indifference, as tho' they had been bales of cloth—and, when I looked down, and saw small boxes handed from one to the other, I little thought any thing of humour could be supposed to pass in those regions—but one of them, chiding the other for so roughly handing a certain duke of Cumberland's bowels—the other answered, with a look of some humour, no less than indignation—*Blast his bowels*.

This prince had been a commander in chief—was not, when in power, a little severe to the soldiers under his command—and, perhaps, this fellow might be a descendant of some person massacred, as it was then called, in a famous battle during a rebellion.

I think

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I think it was called the unnatural rebellion in the year 1745——some people of our family, at that time, thought it not so unnatural——Be it as it will, that nation soon afterwards became regents of this kingdom—and made greater slaughter among the natives, by their power and cunning, than ever we did, in their country, by the sword.

But the general behaviour of the people, in the vault, set me into a reverie of thinking, how little, when the power of serving is gone from us, even monarchs are respected—and this should teach them then, when living, virtue should ever be its own reward, for they are sure of receiving no other here, whatever may happen hereafter, from a world they themselves first render ungrateful—by only selecting the dregs of mankind to serve them——who never can pretend to serve on principle, but interest.

Adieu !

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